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THE

LIFE & CORRESPONDENCE

of the late

ROBERT SOUTHEY,

IN SIX VOLUMES.

EDITED BY HIS SON,

The Rev.d Charles Cuthbert Southey.

VOL. IV.

London:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN & LONGMANS
1850.

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THE

LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

EDITED BY HIS SON, THE

REV. CHARLES CUTHBERT SOUTHEY, M.A.

CURATE OF PLUMBLAND, CUMBERLAND.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

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The Editor is requested to correct a mis-statement in the Autobiography, vol. i. p. 81. It is there said that "Mr. Dolignon, in some delirium, died by his own hand." This is an error; Mr. Dolignon having died of paralysis in the prime of life, "in the full enjoyment of domestic happiness and worldly prosperity."

THE

LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PRESENT HAPPINESS. — AFFAIRS OF THE EDINBURGH ANNUAL REGISTER EMBARRASSED. — LIFE OF NELSON. — RODERICK. — THANKS SIR W. SCOTT FOR ROKEBY. — REGRETS BEING COMPELLED TO PERIODICAL WRITING. — POLITICS. — MR. COLERIDGE'S TRAGEDY BROUGHT OUT. — REMARKS ON THE LOSS OF YOUTHFUL HOPES. — DESTRUCTION OF THE FRENCH ARMY IN RUSSIA. — LIFE OF NELSON COMPLETED. — LITERARY PLANS. — REASONS FOR SUBMITTING TO GIFFORD'S CORRECTIONS. — LETTERS CONCERNING MR. JAMES DUSAUTOY. — GLOOMY POLITICAL FOREBODINGS. — PAPER IN THE QUARTERLY REVIEW ON THE STATE OF THE POOR. — NAVAL REVERSES IN THE WAR WITH AMERICA. — EXPECTED DEATH OF HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW MR. FRICKER. — MONTGOMERY'S DELUGE. — ANIMATED HORSEHAIR. — PLAY BY MR. W. S. LANDOR. — VISIT TO LONDON. — APPOINTMENT AS POET-LAUREATE. — 1813.

THE period of my father's life to which the letters in this volume relate, may be said upon the whole, to have been the busiest and most stirring portion of

it, comprising, as it does, the maturest fruits of his poetical genius, with the most extensive engagements as a prose writer. His position in literature had been long no dubious one; and it had now become evident to him that he must rely upon literature alone as his profession, and trust to it wholly for his support. It might seem, indeed, with the chances, the friends, and the interest he possessed, he had been singularly unfortunate in not obtaining some employment which would have secured him a regular income, and thus rendered him dependent upon authorship, rather for the superfluities than the necessaries of life. If, however, there was any "tide in his affairs" which might have "led to fortune," he did not "take it at the flood;" and having made those two applications which have been noticed (for the Stewardship of the Greenwich Hospital Estates, and for the office of Historiographer Royal), he became wearied with the trouble and annoyance of solicitation, and was, perhaps, too ready to abandon the advantages which he might have obtained. But he was himself very unwilling to take any office which would allow him only a small portion of time for the only pursuit in which he took any pleasure; and it must be admitted that it would not have been easy for his best friends (and warmer friends no man ever possessed) to find any situation or employment which could possibly have suited a man whose tastes and habits were so completely fixed and devoted to a literary life.

The first few years to which we are now coming were the happiest of his life. Settled to his heart's

content at Keswick, having found a few friends in the neighbourhood and county, and having many distant ones most highly esteemed; finding in his labours and in his library (which was rapidly becoming one of the best ever possessed by any person of such limited means) ceaseless occupation and amusement that never palled, he had for the present all his heart's desire, so far, at least, as was compatible with a doubtful and hardly-earned subsistence.

His principal source of income latterly, as the reader has seen, had been derived from the Edinburgh Annual Register; but this from the beginning had been a losing concern, though started with the most sanguine anticipations of success. Indeed, it appears, from the Life of Sir W. Scott (vol. iv. p. 77.), that the actual loss upon it had never been less than 1000*l.* per annum, and it was therefore not to be wondered at that some considerable irregularities occurred in the publisher's payments, and that my father now found it prudent to declare his intention of withdrawing from it when the current volume should be concluded, having already suffered much inconvenience and some embarrassment from this cause.

The defalcation of 400*l.* a year from his income was, however, a very serious matter, and he found it needful, without delay, to cast about for means of supplying its place. The establishment of the Quarterly Review had thus occurred at a fortunate time, both as affording him regular and tolerably profitable employment, and also as giving him scope for ex-

pressing earnest thoughts in vigorous language, which made themselves felt, despite the editor's merciless hand.

This was, indeed, in most respects a far better vehicle than the Register, affording a far wider range of subjects, and speaking to a different and much more numerous class of readers; and, however distasteful to him was the task of reviewing, his objections to it hardly applied to papers upon political, moral, or religious topics, and he felt and acknowledged that his reputation rose higher from his writings in the Quarterly Review than from any of his other works. It is true, indeed, that on its first establishment he wished rather to have books submitted to him for ordinary criticism than for the purpose of writing political essays; but that was simply because in mere reviewing he was well practised, and knew his strength; whereas the other, though a higher department of art, was new to him, and was also less safe ground with reference to those persons whom he believed to influence the publication.

He had also, at this time, and for a few years longer, a constant source of deep and heartfelt delight in the endearing qualities of his only boy, now little more than six years old, who possessed a singularly beautiful and gentle disposition, and who was just beginning to manifest an intellect as quick, and an aptitude for study as remarkable, as his own. This was the head and front of his happiness, the crowning joy of his domestic circle; and while that circle remained unbroken, and he himself head and

heart-whole to labour for his daily bread, the sun shone not upon a happier household. He might, indeed, had he been so disposed, have found enough in the precarious nature of his income to cause him much disquietude; but on such points his mind was imbued with a true philosophy; and while he laboured on patiently and perseveringly, he yet took no undue thought for the morrow, being well persuaded of the truth of the saying, that "sufficient for the day is" both the good and "the evil thereof."

To John May, Esq.

"Keswick, Jan. 3. 1813.

"My dear Friend,

"Many happy new years to you, and may those which are to come prove more favourable to you in worldly concerns than those which are past! I have been somewhat unwell this Christmas; first with a cold, then with a sudden and unaccountable sickness, which, however, has not returned, and I now hope I have been physicked into tolerable order. The young ones are going on well: little Isabel thrives, your god-daughter is old enough to figure at a Christmas dance, and Herbert will very soon be perfect in the regular Greek verb. A Testament is to come for him in my next parcel, and we shall begin upon it as soon as it arrives. No child ever promised better, morally and intellectually. He is very quick of comprehension, retentive, observant, diligent, and as fond of a book and as impatient of idleness as I

am. Would that I were as well satisfied with his bodily health; but in spite of activity and bodily hilarity, he is pale and puny: just that kind of child of whom old women would say that he is too clever to live. Old women's notions are not often so well founded as this; and having this apprehension before my eyes, the uncertainty of human happiness never comes home to my heart so deeply as when I look at him. God's will be done! I must sow the seed as carefully as if I were sure that the harvest would ripen. My two others are the most perfect contrast you ever saw. Bertha, whom I call Queen Henry the Eighth, from her likeness to King Bluebeard, grows like Jonah's gourd, and is the very picture of robust health; and little Kate hardly seems to grow at all, though perfectly well, — she is round as a mushroom-button. Bertha, the bluff queen, is just as grave as Kate is garrulous; they are inseparable play-fellows, and go about the house hand in hand. Shall I never show you this little flock of mine? I have seen almost every one of my friends here except you, than whom none would be more joyfully welcomed.

"I shall have two interesting chapters in this volume for 1811*, upon Sicily and S. America. My Life of Nelson, by a miscalculation, which lies between Murray and the printer, will appear in two volumes instead of one, which will materially, beyond all doubt, injure the sale. Murray has most probably ordered a large impression, calculating upon

* Edinburgh Annual Register.

its going off as a midshipman's manual, which design is thus prevented. If, however, this impression can pass off, I shall have no fear of its answering his purpose when printed in a suitable form; for though the subject was not of my own choice, and might be reasonably thought to be out of my proper line, I have satisfied myself in the execution far more than I could have expected to do. The second sheet of the second volume is now before me. I have just finished the battle of Copenhagen, which makes an impressive narrative. Two chapters more will complete it, and I hope to send you the book by the beginning of March. My labour with it will be completed much before that time, probably in ten days or a fortnight; and then the time which it now occupies will be devoted to the *indigesta moles* of Mr. Walpole's papers. I find the day too short for the employment which it brings; however, if I cannot always get through what is before me as soon as could be wished, in process of time I get through it all. My poem* comes on well; about 2700 lines are written; the probable extent is 5000; but the last half is like going down hill, — the difficulty is over, and your progress accelerates itself. The poem is of a perfectly original character. What its success may be I cannot guess.

Yours, very affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

* Roderick, the Last of the Goths.

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"Keswick, Jan. 13. 1813.

"My dear Scott,

"I received Rokeby on Monday evening, and you need not be told that I did not go to bed till I had read the poem through. It is yours all over, and, like all its brethren, perfectly original. I have only to congratulate you upon its appearance, upon its life and spirit, and (with sure and certain anticipation) upon its success. Let me correct an error in your last note, in time for the second edition. Robin the Devil lived not upon one of our islands, but on Curwen's in Winandermere, which then belonged to the Philipsons'. You may find the story in Nicholson and Burns' History of Westmoreland, pp. 185-6.

"I enjoyed your poem the more, being for the first time able to follow you in its scenery. My introduction at Rokeby* was a very awkward one; and if the old woman who would not let me through the gate till I had promised her to call at the house, had been the porter or the porter's wife on the day of your story, Edmund might have sung long enough before he could have got in. However, when this awkwardness was over, I was very much obliged to her for forcing me into such society, for nothing could be more hospitable or more gratifying than the manner in which I and my companions were received. The glen is, for its extent, more beautiful than any thing

* See vol. iii. p. 345.

I have seen in England. If I had known your subject, I could have helped you to some Teesiana for your description — the result of the hardest day's march I ever yet made. For we traced the stream from its spring-head, on the summit of Cross-fell, about a mile from the source of the Tyne, all the way to Highforce.

"In the course of next month I hope you will receive my Life of Nelson, a subject not self-chosen — and out of my way, but executed *con amore*. Some of my periodical employment I must ere long relinquish, or I shall never complete the great historical works upon which so many years have been bestowed, in which so much progress has been made, and for which it is little likely that any other person in the country will ever so qualify himself again. Yonder they are lying unfinished, while I suffer myself to be tempted to other occupations of more immediate emolument indeed, but, in all other respects, of infinitely less importance. Meanwhile time passes on, and I who am of a short-lived race, and have a sense of the uncertainty of life more continually present in my thoughts and feelings than most men, sometimes reproach myself for not devoting my time to those works upon which my reputation, and perhaps the fortunes of my family, must eventually rest, while the will is strong, the ability yet unimpaired, and the leisure permitted me. If I do not greatly deceive myself, my History of Portugal will be one of the most curious books of its kind that has ever yet appeared — the matter is in itself so interesting, and I have hunted out so much that is recondite, and have so much strong light

to throw upon things which have never been elucidated before.

"Remember us to Mrs. Scott, and believe me,
My dear brother bard,
Yours most truly,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq.

"Keswick, Jan. 17. 1813.

"My dear Wynn,

"It is somewhat late to speak of Christmas and the New Year; nevertheless I wish you as many as you may be capable of enjoying, and the more the better. Winter is passing on mildly with us; and if it were not for our miry soil and bad ways, I should not wish for pleasanter weather than January has brought with it. Ailments rather than inclination have led me of late to take regular exercise, which I was wont to think I could do without as well as a Turk; so I take two or three of the children with me, and, giving them leave to call upon me for their daily walk, their eagerness overcomes my propensities for the chair and the desk; we now go before breakfast, for the sake of getting the first sunshine on the mountains, which, when the snow is on them, is more glorious than at any other season. Yesterday I think I heard the wild swan, and this morning had the finest sight of wild-fowl I ever beheld: there was a cloud of them above the lake, at such a height, that frequently they became invisible, then twinkled

into sight again, sometimes spreading like smoke as it ascends, then contracting as if performing some military evolution,—once they formed a perfect bow; and thus wheeling and charging, and rising and falling, they continued to sport as long as I could watch them. They were probably wild ducks.

"Your godson is determined to be a poet, he says; and I was not a little amused by his telling me this morning, when he came near a hollow tree which has caught his eye lately, and made him ask me sundry questions about it, that the first poem he should make should be about that hollow tree. I have made some progress in rhyming the Greek accidence for him, — an easier thing than you would perhaps suppose it to be; it tickles his humour, and lays hold of his memory.

"This last year has been full of unexpected events, such indeed as mock all human foresight. The present will bring with it business of importance at home, whatever may happen abroad.

"There is one point in which most men, however opposite in their judgments about the affairs of the Peninsula, have been deceived, — in their expectations from the Cortes. There is a lamentable want of wisdom in the country; among the peasantry its place is supplied by their love of the soil and that invincible perseverance which so strongly marks the Spanish character. Bonaparte never can subdue them, even if his power had received no shock, and his whole attention were exclusively directed towards Spain: his life, though it should be prolonged to the length of Aurengzebe's (as great a villain as himself),

would not give him time to wear out their perseverance and religious hatred. I have never doubted of the eventual independence of Spain; but concerning the government which may grow out of the struggle my hopes diminish, and I begin to think that Portugal has better prospects than Spain, because the government there may be induced to reform itself.

"If Gifford prints what I have written, and lets it pass unmutilated, you will see in the next Quarterly some remarks upon the moral and political state of the populace, and the alarming manner in which Jacobinism (disappearing from the educated classes) has sunk into the mob; a danger far more extensive and momentous than is generally admitted. Very likely a sort of cowardly prudence may occasion some suppressions, which I should be sorry for. Wyndham would have acknowledged the truth of the picture, and have been with me for looking the danger in the face. It is an odd fact that the favourite song among the people in this little town just now (as I have happened to learn) is upon Parker the mutineer: it purports to have been written by his wife, and is in metre and diction just what such a woman would write.

"What part do you take in the East Indian question? I perceive its magnitude, and am wholly incapable of forming an opinion.

"Coleridge's tragedy*, which Sheridan and Kemble

* After the successful appearance of this tragedy, which was entitled "Remorse," my father wrote — "I never doubted that Coleridge's play would meet with a triumphant reception. Be it known now and remembered hereafter, that this self-same play, having had

rejected fifteen years ago, will come out in about a fortnight at Drury Lane.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Dr. Gooch.

"Keswick, Jan. 20. 1813.

"My dear Gooch,

". . . . . .

Wordsworth refers, in more than one of his poems, with a melancholy feeling of regret, to the loss of youthful thoughts and hopes. In the last six weeks he has lost two children — one of them a fine boy of seven years old. I believe he feels, as I have felt before him, that 'there is healing in the bitter cup,'— that God takes from us those we love as hostages for our faith (if I may so express myself), — and that to those who look to a reunion in a better world, where there shall be no separation, and no mutability except that which results from perpetual progressiveness, the evening becomes more delightful than the morning, and the sunset offers brighter and lovelier visions than those which we build up in the morning clouds, and which disappear before the strength of the day. The older I grow — and I am older in feeling than in years — the more I am sensible of this: there is

no other alterations made in it now than C. was willing to have made in it then, was rejected in 1797 by Sheridan and Kemble. Had these sapient caterers for the public brought it forward at that time, it is by no means improbable that the author might have produced a play as good every season: with my knowledge of Coleridge's habits I verily believe he would." — *To G. C. B. Jan.* 27. 1813.

a precious alchemy in this faith, which transmutes grief into joy, or, rather, it is the true and heavenly euphrasy which clears away the film from our mortal sight, and makes affliction appear what, in reality, it is to the wise and good, — a dispensation of mercy.

"God bless you!

Yours affectionately,
R. SOUTHEY."

To Mr. Neville White.

"Keswick, Jan. 25. 1813.

"My dear Neville,

"Before I say anything of my own doings, let me rejoice with you over these great events in the North. Never in civilised Europe had there been so great an army brought together as Bonaparte had there collected, and never was there so total and tremendous a destruction. I verily think that this is the fourth act of the Corsican, and that the catastrophe of the bloody drama is near. May his fall be as awful as his crimes! The siege of Dantzic, and the accession of Prussia to our alliance, will, probably, be our next news. Saxony will be the next government to emancipate itself, for there the government is as well disposed as the people. I wish I could flatter myself that Alexander were great enough to perform an act of true wisdom as well as magnanimity, and re-establish Poland, not after the villanous manner of Bonaparte, but with

all its former territory, giving up his own portion of that infamously acquired plunder, and taking Prussia's part by agreement, and Austria's by force; for Austria will most likely incline towards the side of France, in fear of Russia, and in hatred of the House of Brandenburgh. May this vile power share in his overthrow and destruction, for it has cursed Germany too long!

"Was there ever an infatuation like that of the party in this country who are crying out for peace? as if this country had not ample cause to repent of having once before given up the vantage ground of war, at a peace forced upon the state by a faction! Let us remember Utrecht, and not suffer the Whigs of this day to outdo the villany of the Tories of that. There can be no peace with Bonaparte, none with France, that is not dictated at the edge of the sword. Peace, I trust, is now not far distant, and one which France must kneel to receive, not England to ask.

"The opening of the Baltic will come seasonably for our manufactures, and, if it set the looms to work again, we may hope that it will suspend the danger which has manifested itself, and give time for measures which may prevent its recurrence. You will see in the next Quarterly a paper upon the State of the Poor, — or, rather, the populace, — wherein I have pointed out the causes of this danger, and its tremendous extent, which, I believe, few persons are aware of. I shall be sorry if it be mutilated from any false notions of prudence. It may often be necessary to keep a patient ignorant of his real state,

but public danger ought always to be met boldly, and looked in the face. I impute the danger to the ignorance of the poor, which is the fault of the State, for not having seen to their moral and religious instruction; to the manufacturing system, acting upon persons in this state of ignorance, and vitiating them; and to the Anarchist journalists (Cobbett, Hunt, &c.) perseveringly addressing themselves to such willing and fit recipients of their doctrines.

"In the last number I reviewed D'Israeli's Calamities of Literature, the amusing book of a very good-natured man.

"The poem goes on slow and sure. Twenty years ago nothing could equal the ardour with which I pursued such employments. I was then impatient to see myself in print: it was not possible to long more eagerly than I did for the honour of authorship. This feeling is quite extinct; and, allowing as much as may be allowed for experience, wiser thoughts, and, if you please, satiety in effecting such a change, I cannot but believe that much must be attributed to a sort of autumnal or evening tone of mind, coming upon me a little earlier than it does upon most men. I am as cheerful as a boy, and retain many youthful or even boyish habits; but I am older in mind than in years, and in years than in appearance; and, though none of the joyousness of youth is lost, there is none of its ardour left. Composition, where any passion is called forth, excites me more than it is desirable to be excited; and, if it were not for the sake of gratifying two or three persons in the world whom I love, and who love me,

it is more than probable that I might never write a verse again. God bless you!

Yours affectionately,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To the Rev. Herbert Hill.

"Keswick, Feb. 1. 1813.

"My dear Uncle,

"The Life of Nelson* was completed this morning. The printer began with it before it was half written, but I have distanced him by ten sheets. Do not fear that I have been proceeding too fast: it is he who, after the manner of printers, has given me plenty of time by taking his own. This is a subject which I should never have dreamt of touching, if it had not been thrust upon me. I have walked among sea terms as carefully as a cat does among crockery; but, if I have succeeded in making the narrative continuous and clear — the very reverse of what it is in the lives before me — the materials are, in themselves, so full of character, so picturesque, and so sublime, that it cannot fail of being a good book. . . . . I am very much inclined to attempt, under some such title as the Age of George III., a sketch of the revolutions which, almost everywhere

* This, which was perhaps upon the whole the most popular of any of my father's works, originated in an article in the fifth number of the Quarterly Review, which was enlarged at Murray's request. My father received altogether 300*l.* for it. 100*l.* for the Review; 100*l.* when the Life was enlarged; and 100*l.* when it was published in the Family Library.

and in all things, have taken place within the last half century. Any comparison which it might induce with Voltaire would rather invite than deter me. When I come to town I shall talk with Murray about this.

"You wonder that I should submit to any expurgations in the Quarterly. The fact is, that there must be a power expurgatory in the hands of the editor; and the misfortune is, that editors frequently think it incumbent on them to use that power merely because they have it. I do not like to break with the Review, because Gifford has been something more than merely civil to me, and offered me services which I had no reason to expect, because the Review gives me (and shame it is that it should be so) more repute than anything else which I could do, and because there is no channel through which so much effect can be given to what I may wish to impress upon the opinion of the public. . . . .

"My aim and hope are, ere long, to support myself by the sale of half my time, and have the other half for the completion of my History. When I can command 500*l.* for the same quantity that Scott gets 3000*l.* for, this will be accomplished, and this is likely soon to be the case. God bless you!

R. S."

My father's publication of Kirke White's Remains very naturally drew upon him many applications for similar assistance; and curious indeed would be the collections of verses, good, bad, and indifferent, which from time to time were transmitted to him by

youthful poets. But few of these, as may well be imagined, gave sufficient promise to warrant his giving any encouragement to their writers to proceed in the up-hill path of authorship; others, however, showed such proofs of talent, that he could not but urge its cultivation, though he invariably gave the strongest warnings against choosing literature as anything but a recreation, or a possible assistance while following some other profession. In the case of Ebenezer Elliott this led to an interesting correspondence with a man of great genius. Many of the applications he received do not admit of any particular account; but among them are some which give us glimpses of youthful minds whose loss the world has cause to lament. Such was William Roberts; and such also was one whose story now comes before me.

It seems that at the beginning of the year a youth of the name of Dusautoy, then about seventeen years of age, the son of a retired officer residing at Totness, Devon, and one of a numerous family, had written to my father, enclosing some pieces of poetry, and requesting his opinion and advice as to their publication. Neither the letter nor the reply to it have been preserved; but in Dusautoy's rejoinder, he expresses his grateful thanks for the warning given him; against the imprudence of prematurely throwing himself upon the cold judgment of the public; and asks in what degree it was probable or possible that literature would assist him in making his way to the bar, the profession to which at that time he was most inclined. Being one of a large family, his

laudable object was as far as possible to procure the means for his own education.*

My father's reply was as follows: —

* It appears that two years before writing to my father, young Dusautoy, then a school-boy of fifteen, had made a similar application to Sir Walter Scott; whose reply, which is now before me, is very characteristic of the kind-hearted frankness and sound judgment of the writer. Some portion of it will, I think, interest the reader, as it is now published for the first time. After saying that "though in general he had made it a rule to decline giving an opinion upon the verses so often sent him for his criticism, this application was so couched that he could not well avoid making an exception in their favour," he adds, — "I have only to caution you against relying very much upon it: the friends who know me best, and to whose judgment I am myself in the constant habit of trusting, reckon me a very capricious and uncertain judge of poetry; and I have had repeated occasions to observe that I have often failed in anticipating the reception of poetry from the public. Above all, sir, I must warn you against suffering yourself to suppose, that the power of enjoying natural beauty, and poetical description, are necessarily connected with that of producing poetry. The former is really a gift of Heaven, which conduces inestimably to the happiness of those who enjoy it. The second has much more of a knack in it than the pride of poets is always willing to admit; and, at any rate, is only valuable when combined with the first. . . . . I would also caution you against an enthusiasm which, while it argues an excellent disposition and feeling heart, requires to be watched and restrained, though not repressed. It is apt, if too much indulged, to engender a fastidious contempt for the ordinary business of the world, and gradually to render us unfit for the exercise of the useful and domestic virtues, which depends greatly upon our not exalting our feelings above the temper of well ordered and well educated society. No good man can ever be happy when he is unfit for the career of simple and commonplace duty; and I need not add how many melancholy instances there are of extravagance and profligacy being resorted to under pretence of contempt for the common rules of life. Cultivate then, sir, your taste for poetry and the belles-lettres as an elegant and most interesting amusement; but combine it with studies of a more severe and solid cast, and such as are most intimately connected with your prospects in future life. In the words of Solomon — 'My son, get knowledge.'"

The remainder of the letter consists of some critical remarks upon the pieces submitted to him; which, he says, appear to him "to have all the merits and most of the faults of juvenile composition; to be fanciful, tender, and elegant; and to exhibit both command of language and luxuriance of imagination." — *Ashiestiel, May* 6. 1811.

To James Dusautoy, Esq.

"Keswick, Feb. 12. 1813.

"My dear Sir,

"Your talents will do every thing for you in time, but nothing in the way you wish for some years to come. The best road to the bar is through the university, where honours of every kind will be within your reach. With proper conduct you would obtain a fellowship by the time you were one or two and twenty, and this would enable you to establish yourself in one profession or another, at your own choice.

"This course is as desirable for your intellectual as for your worldly advancement. Your mind would then have time and opportunity to ripen, and bring forth its fruits in due season. God forbid that they should either be forced or blighted! A young man cannot support himself by literary exertions, however great his talents and his industry. Woe be to the youthful poet who sets out upon his pilgrimage to the temple of fame with nothing but hope for his viaticum! There is the Slough of Despond, and the Hill of Difficulty, and the Valley of the Shadow of Death upon the way!

"To be called to the bar you must be five years a member of one of the inns of court; but if you have a university degree, three will suffice. Men who during this course look to their talents for support usually write for newspapers or reviews: the former is destructively laborious, and sends many poor fel-

lows prematurely to the grave; for the latter branch of employment there are always too many applicants. I began it at the age of four and twenty, which was long before I was fit for it.

"The stage, indeed, is a lottery where there is more chance of a prize; but there is an evil attending success in that direction which I can distinctly see, though you perhaps may not be persuaded of it. The young man who produces a successful play is usually the dupe of his own success; and being satisfied with producing an immediate and ephemeral effect, looks for nothing beyond it. You must aim at something more. I think your path is plain. Success at the university is not exclusively a thing of chance or favour; you are certain of it if you deserve it.

"When you have considered this with your friends, tell me the result, and rest assured that my endeavours to forward your wishes in this, or in any other course which you may think proper to pursue, shall be given with as much sincerity as this advice; meantime read Greek, and write as many verses as you please. By shooting at a high mark you will gain strength of arm, and precision of aim will come in its proper season.

Ever yours very truly,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

Upon further consideration it was determined that Dusautoy should enter at Cambridge; and my father having taken some trouble in the matter, he was

very soon admitted a member of Emanuel College. In the following year (1814) he was an unsuccessful competitor for the English poetical prize *, the present Master of Trinity, Dr. Whewell, being the successful one. In the college examination he stood high, being the first man of his year in classics and fourth in mathematics. He also obtained several exhibitions, and had the promise of a scholarship as soon as a vacancy occurred. In the midst, however, of high hopes and earnest intentions he fell a victim, among many others, to a malignant fever, which raged at Cambridge with such violence that all lectures were stopped, and the men who had escaped its influence permitted to return home. As an acknowledgment of his talents and character he was buried in the cloisters of his college; a mark of respect, I understand, never before paid to any undergraduate.

My father had at one time intended publishing a selection from Dusautoy's papers, which were sent to him for that purpose; but further reflection convinced him that his first inspection of them "had led him to form too hasty a conclusion, not as to the intellectual power which they displayed, but as to the effect which they were likely to produce if brought before the public. To me," he continues, "the most obvious faults of these fragments are the most unequivocal proofs of genius in the author, as being efforts of a mind conscious of a strength which it had not yet learnt to use,—exuberance, which

* The subject was Boadicea; and Dusautoy's composition an ode, "injudiciously written in Spenser's stanza."

proved the vigour of the plant and the richness of the soil. But common readers read only to be amused, and to them these pieces would appear crude and extravagant, because they would only see what *is*, without any reference to what might have been."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq.

"Keswick, March 12. 1813.

"My dear Wynn,

"Do not be too sure of your victory in the House of Commons. It is not unlikely that when the securities come to be discussed you will find yourselves in a minority there, as well as in the country at large. The mischief, however, is done. It is like certain bodily complaints, trifling in themselves, but of infinite import as symptomatic of approaching death. The more I see, the more I read, and the more I reflect, the more reason there appears to me to fear that our turn of revolution is hastening on. In the minds of the busy part of the public it is already effected. The save-all reformers have made them suspicious; the opposition has made them discontented; the anarchists are making them furious. Methodism is undermining the Church, and your party, in league with all varieties of opinionists, have battered it till you have succeeded in making a breach. I give you all credit for good intentions; but I know the dissenters and the philosophists better than you do, and know that the principle

which they have in common is a hatred of the Church of England, and a wish to overthrow her. This they will accomplish, and you will regret it as much as I do; certainly not the less for having yourself contributed to its destruction.

"The end of all this will be the loss of liberty, for that is the penalty which, in the immutable order of things, is appointed for the abuse of it. What we may have to go through, before we sit down quietly in our chains, God only knows.

"Have you heard of the strange circumstance about Coleridge? A man hanging himself in the Park with one of *his* shirts on, marked at full length! Guess C.'s astonishment at reading this in a newspaper at a coffee-house. The thing is equally ridiculous and provoking. It will alarm many persons who know him, and I dare say many will always believe that the man was C. himself, but that he was cut down in time, and that his friends said it was somebody else in order to conceal the truth. As yet, however, I have laughed about it too much to be vexed.

"I have just got General Mackinnon's Journal*: never was any thing more faithful than his account of the country and the people. We have, I fear, few such men in the British army. I knew a sister of his well some years ago, and should rejoice to meet with her again, for she was one of the cleverest women I ever knew. When they lived in France, Bonaparte was a frequent visitor at their mother's

* See Inscription, xxxv. p. 178. one vol. edit.

house. Mackinnon would have made a great man. His remarks upon a want of subordination, and proper regulations in our army, are well worthy of Lord Wellington's consideration. It was by thinking thus, and forming his army, upon good moral as well as military principles, that Gustavus became the greatest captain of modern times: so he may certainly be called, because he achieved the greatest things with means which were apparently the most inadequate. God bless you!

R. SOUTHEY."

In a former letter my father speaks of an article he had written for the forthcoming number of the Quarterly Review, on the state of the poor, and he there mentions briefly the heads of the general view he had taken of the subject. This had appeared, and Mr. Rickman now comments on it, whose practical and sensible remarks I quote here, as showing his frankness in stating differences of opinion, and his friend's willingness to hear and consider them: —

"I have read your article on the poor with great satisfaction, for the abundance of wit it contains, and the general truth of its statements and reflections. With some things you know I do not agree, — for instance, not in your dislike of manufactures to the same degree, — especially I do not find them guilty of increasing the poor. For instance, no county is more purely agricultural than Sussex, where *twenty-three* persons, parents and children, in *one hundred* receive parish relief; no county more clearly to be referred to the manufacturing character than Lancashire, where

the persons relieved by the parish are *seven in one hundred,* — not a third part of the agricultural poverty. An explanation of this (not in a letter) will perhaps lead you to different views of the poor's-rate plan of relief, which in agricultural counties operates as a mode of equalising wages according to the number of mouths in a family, so that the single man receives much less than his labour is worth, the married man much more. I do not approve of this, nor of the Poor Laws at all; but it is a view of the matter which, in your opinion more, perhaps, than in mine, may lessen the amount of the mischief. . . . .

"I am afraid nothing will settle my mind about your wide education plan — a great *good* or a great *evil* certainly, but which I am not sure while the liberty of the press remains. I believe that more seditious newspapers than Bibles will be in use among your pupils.

"We go on badly in the House of Commons. . . . . The Ministry considers nothing, forsooth, as a Cabinet question, — that is, they have no opinion collectively. I cannot imagine anything in history more pitiful than their junction and alliance with the high and mighty mob against the East India Company — an establishment second only, if second, to the English Government, in importance to mankind. As to the Catholics, they will gain little from the House of Commons, and nothing from the Lords."*

* J. R. to R. S., March 12. 1813.

To John Rickman, Esq.

"March, 1813.

" My dear Rickman,

" You and I shall agree about general education. Ignorance is no preventive in these days, if, indeed, it ever were one which could be relied on. All who have ears can hear sedition, and the more ignorant they are, the more easy is it to inflame them. My plan is (I know not whether Gifford has ventured to give it) to make transportation the punishment for seditious libelling. This and this only would be an effectual cure. The existence of a press in the state in which ours is in, is incompatible with the security of any Government.

" About the manufacturing system, as affecting the poor-rates, doubtless you are best informed. My argument went to show that, under certain circumstances of not unfrequent occurrence, manufactures occasioned a sudden increase of the craving mouths, and that the whole previous discipline of these persons fitted them to become Luddites. It is most likely there may be some ambiguity in that part of the article, from the vague use of the word poor, which ought to be distinguished from pauper, — a distinction I never thought of making till your letter made me see the necessity for so doing.

" You give me comfort about the Catholics, and strengthen my doubts about the East India question. I have written on the former subject in the forthcoming

Register, very much to the purport of Mr. Abbot's speech. Mr. Perceval should have given the Catholics what is right and proper they should have, by a bill originating with himself. What but ruin can be expected when a Government comes to capitulate with the factious part of its subjects! . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, May 26. 1813.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"Tom is made quite unhappy by these repeated victories of the Americans; and for my own part I regard them with the deepest and gloomiest forebodings. The superior weight of metal will not account for all. I heard a day or two ago from a Liverpoolian, lately in America, that they stuff their wadding with bullets. This may kill a few more men, but will not explain how it is that our ships are so soon demolished, not merely disabled. Wordsworth and I agreed in suspecting some improvement in gunnery (Fulton is likely enough to have discovered something) before I saw the same supposition thrown out in the 'Times.' Still there would remain something more alarming to be resolved, and that is, how it happens that we injure them so little? I very much fear that there may be a dreadful secret

at the bottom, which your fact about the cartridges* of the Macedonian points at. Do you know, or does Henry know, a belief in the navy which I heard from Ponsonby, that the crew of the —— loaded purposely in this manner, in order that by being made prisoners they might be delivered from ——'s tyranny? When Coleridge was at Malta, Sir A. Ball received a round-robin from ——'s crew, many of whom had served under him, and who addressed him in a manner which made his heart ache, as he was, of course, compelled to put the paper into ——'s hands. One day Coleridge was with him when this man's name was announced, and turning, he said to him in a low voice, 'Here comes one of those men who will one day blow up the British navy.'

"I do not know that the captain of the Macedonian was a tyrant. Peake certainly was not; he is well known here, having married a cousin of Wordsworth's; his ship was in perfect order, and he as brave and able a man as any in the service. Here it seems that the men behaved well; but in ten minutes the ship was literally knocked to pieces, her sides fairly staved in; and I think this can only be explained by some improvements in the manufactory of powder, or in the manner of loading, &c. But as

* "H. Sharp is just arrived from Lisbon; he has been in America, where he went on board the Macedonian and the United States.[1] He says the captured ship was pierced through and through, and full of shot, while in the American vessel scarcely any have been lodged. Our ship seems to have been very badly fought; the captors declared that they found many of the guns with the cartridges put in the wrong way." — *G. C. B. to R. S., May* 24. 1813

[1] The name of the vessel that took the Macedonian.

a general fact, and of tremendous application, I verily believe that the sailors prefer the enemy's service to our own. It is in vain to treat the matter lightly, or seek to conceal from ourselves the extent of the evil. Our naval superiority is destroyed!

"My chief business in town will be to make arrangements for supplying the huge deficit which the termination of my labours in the Register occasions. I wish to turn to present account my Spanish materials, and still more the insight which I have acquired into the history of the war in the Peninsula; and to recast that portion of the Register, carry it on, and bring it forth in a suitable form. This cannot be done without the consent of the publishers — Ballantyne, Longman, and Murray. To the two latter I have written, and am about to write to James Ballantyne. Should the thing be brought to bear, I must procure an introduction to Marquis Wellesley, — that is, to the documents which I doubt not he would very readily supply; and I should have occasion for all the assistance from the Foreign Office which my friends could obtain. To the Marquis I have means of access through Mr. Littleton, and probably, also, *viâ* Gifford, through Canning. It may be of use if you make known my wishes in that quarter.

R. S."

To Mr. Neville White.

"Keswick, June 14. 1813.

"My dear Neville,

"Josiah Conder had told me, though less particularly, the circumstances of your sister's happy death,

for happy we must call it. The prayer in the Litany against *sudden* death, I look upon as a relic of Romish error, the only one remaining in that finest of all human compositions, — death without confession and absolution being regarded by the Romanist as the most dreadful of all calamities, naturally is one of the evils from which they pray to be delivered. I substitute the word *violent* in my supplications; for since that mode of dissolution which, in the Scriptures, is termed falling asleep, and which should be the natural termination of life passed in peace and innocence and happiness, has become so rare, that it falls scarcely to the lot of one in ten thousand, instantaneous and unforeseen death is the happiest mode of our departure, and it is even more desirable for the sake of our surviving friends than for our own. I speak feelingly, for at this time my wife's brother is in the room below me, in such a state of extreme exhaustion, that having been carried down stairs at two o'clock, it would not in the least surprise me, if he should expire before he can be carried up again. He is in the last stage of consumption, — a disease which at first affected the liver having finally assumed this form; his recovery is impossible by any means short of miracle. I have no doubt that he is within a few days of his death, perhaps a few hours; and sincerely do I wish, for his sake and for that of four sisters who are about him, that the tragedy may have closed before this reaches you. According to all appearance it will.

"Your letter, my dear Neville, represents just that state of mind which I expected to find you in.

The bitterness of the cup is not yet gone, and some savour of it will long remain; but you already taste the uses of affliction, and feel that ties thus broken on earth are only removed to heaven.

"Montgomery's poem came in the same parcel with your letter. I had previously written about it to the Quarterly, and was told, in reply, that it was wished to pass it by there, because it had disappointed every body. I wish I could say that I myself did not in some degree feel disappointed also; yet there is so much that is really beautiful, and which I can sincerely praise, and the outline of the story will read so well with the choicest passages interspersed, that I shall send up a reviewal, and do, as a Frenchman would say, *my possible*. Of what is good in the poem I am a competent judge; of what may be defective in it, my judgment is not, perhaps, so properly to be trusted, for having once planned a poem upon the Deluge myself, I necessarily compare my own outline with Montgomery's. The best part is the death of Adam. Oh! if the whole had been like that! or (for that is impossible) that there had been two or three passages equal to it! Montgomery has crippled himself by a metre, which, of all others, is the worst for long and various narrative, and which most certainly betrays a writer into the common track and commonplaces of poetical language. He has thought of himself in Javan, and the character of Javan is hardly prominent enough to be made the chief personage. Yet there is much, very much to admire and to recur to with pleasure.

"God bless you! Remember me to your mother,

and tell James I shall always be glad to hear from him, as well as of him.

Yours most truly,

R. SOUTHEY."

To Dr. Southey.

"Keswick, June 6. 1813.

"My dear Harry,

"Do you want to make your fortune in the philosophical world? If so, you may thank Owen Lloyd for the happiest opportunity that was ever put into an aspirant's hands. You must have heard the vulgar notion that a horsehair, plucked out by the root and put in water, becomes alive in a few days. The boys at Brathay repeatedly told their mother it was true, that they had tried it themselves and seen it tried. Her reply was, show it me and I will believe it. While we were there last week in came Owen with two of these creatures in a bottle. Wordsworth was there; and to our utter and unutterable astonishment did the boys, to convince us that these long thin black worms were their own manufactory by the old receipt, lay hold of them by the middle while they writhed like eels, and stripping them with their nails down on each side, actually lay bare the horsehair in the middle, which seemed to serve as the backbone of the creature, or the substratum of the living matter which had collected round it.

"Wordsworth and I should both have supposed that it was a collection of animalculæ round the hair

(which, however, would only be changing the nature of the wonder), if we could any way have accounted for the motion upon this theory; but the motion was that of a snake. We could perceive no head; but something very like the root of the hair. And for want of glasses, could distinguish no parts. The creature, or whatever else you may please to call it, is black or dark brown, and about the girth of a fiddle string. As soon as you have read this draw upon your horse's tail and mane for half a dozen hairs; be sure they have roots to them; bottle them separately in water, and when they are alive and kicking, call in Gooch, and make the fact known to the philosophical world.* Never in my life was I so astonished as at seeing, what even in the act of seeing I could scarcely believe, and now almost doubt. If you verify the experiment, as Owen and all his brethren will swear must be the case, you will be able to throw some light upon the origin of your friend the tapeworm, and his diabolical family.

"No doubt you will laugh and disbelieve this, and half suspect that I am jesting. But indeed I have only told you the fact as it occurred; and you will at once see its whole importance in philosophy, and the use which you and Gooch may derive from it, coming forth with a series of experiments, and with

* "The Cyclopædia says that the Gordius Aquaticus is vulgarly supposed to be animated horsehair; the print of the creature represents it as much smaller than Owen Lloyd's manufactory, which is as large as the other Gordii upon the same plate, and very like them. But I distinctly saw the hair when the accretion was stripped off with the nail."—*R. S. to J. R., August* 2. 1813.

such deductions as your greyhound sight and his beagle scent will soon start and pursue.

"And if the *horse's* hair succeeds, Sir Domine, by parallel reasoning you know, try one of your own.

R. S."

To Walter Savage Landor, Esq.

"Keswick, June 30. 1813.

"Your comedy came to hand a fortnight ago. . . . . The charitable dowager is drawn from the life. At least it has all the appearance of a portrait. As a drama there is a want of incident and of probability in that upon which the catastrophe depends; but the dialogue abounds with those felicities which flash from you in prose and verse, more than from any other writer. I remember nothing which at all resembles them, except in Jeremy Taylor: he has things as perfect and as touching in their kind, but the kind is different; there is the same beauty, the same exquisite fitness; but not the point and poignancy which you display in the comedy and in the commentary, nor the condensation and strength which characterise Gebir and Count Julian.

"I did not fail to notice the neighbourly compliment which you bestow upon the town of Abergavenny. Even out of Wales, however, something good may come besides Welsh flannel and lambswool stockings. I am reading a great book from Brecknock; for from Brecknock, of all other places under the sun, the fullest Mahommedan history which has

yet appeared in any European language, has come forth. Without being a good historian, Major Price is a very useful one; he amuses me very much, and his volumes are full of facts which you cannot forget, though the Mahommedan *propria quæ maribus* render it impossible ever accurately to remember any thing more than the great outlines. A dramatist in want of tragic subjects never need look beyond these two quarto volumes.

"What Jupiter means to do with us, he himself best knows; for as he seems to have stultified all parties at home, and all powers abroad, there is no longer the old criterion of his intentions to help us in our foresight. I think this campaign will lead to a peace: such a peace will be worse than a continuance of the war if it leaves Bonaparte alive; but the causes of the armistice are as yet a mystery to me; and if hostilities should be renewed, which on the whole seems more probable than that they should be terminated, I still hope to see his destruction. The peace which would then ensue would be lasting, and during a long interval of exhaustion and rest perhaps the world will grow wiser and learn a few practical lessons from experience. . . . . God bless you!

R. S."

At the beginning of September my father went for a visit of a few weeks to London and the vicinity; and his letters from thence detail fully all the circumstances connected with his appointment to the office of Poet-Laureate. These have been several times related, but never so accurately as here by himself.

Mr. Lockhart, in his Life of Sir Walter Scott, gives the main facts, but was probably not acquainted with them all. My father, in the preface to the collected edition of his poems, corrects that account in a few minor details, but for obvious reasons omits to mention that the offer of the office to Sir Walter was made without the Prince's knowledge.

There is now, however, no reason for suppressing any of the circumstances, and no further comments of mine are needful to elucidate what the reader will find so clearly explained.

To Mrs. Southey.

"Streatham, Sunday, Sept. 5. 1813.

"My dear Edith,

". . . . . .

One of the letters which you forwarded was from James Ballantyne; my business in that quarter seems likely to terminate rather better than might have been expected. I wish you had opened the other, which was from Scott. It will be easier to transcribe it than to give its contents; and it does him so much honour that you ought to see it without delay. — 'My dear Southey, — On my return home I found, to my no small surprise, a letter tendering me the laurel vacant by the death of the poetical Pye. I have declined the appointment as being incompetent to the task of annual commemoration; but chiefly as being provided for in my professional department, and unwilling to incur the censure of en-

grossing the emolument* attached to one of the few appointments which seems proper to be filled by a man of literature who has no other views in life. Will you forgive me, my dear friend, if I own I had you in my recollection? I have given Croker the hint, and otherwise endeavoured to throw the office into your *choice* (this is not Scott's word, but I cannot decypher the right one). I am uncertain if you will like it, for the laurel has certainly been tarnished by some of its wearers, and, as at present managed, its duties are inconvenient and somewhat liable to ridicule. But the latter matter might be amended, and I should think the Regent's good sense would lead him to lay aside these biennial commemorations; and as to the former point, it has been worn by Dryden of old, and by Warton in modern days. If you quote my own refusal against me, I reply, 1st, I have been luckier than you in holding two offices not usually conjoined. 2dly, I did not refuse it from any foolish prejudice against the situation, otherwise how durst I mention it to you my elder brother in the muse? but from a sort of internal hope that they would give it to you, upon whom it would be so much more worthily conferred. For I am not such an ass as not to know that you are my better in poetry, though I have had (probably but for a time) the tide of popularity in my favour. I have not time to add ten thousand other reasons, but I only wished to tell you how the matter was, and to beg you to think before

* Sir Walter Scott seems to have been under the impression that the emoluments of the Laureateship amounted to 300*l.* or 400*l.* a year. — See *Life of Scott*, vol. iv. p. 118.

you reject the offer which I flatter myself will be made you. If I had not been, like Dogberry, a fellow with two gowns already, I should have jumped at it like a cock at a gooseberry. Ever yours most truly, W. S.'

"I thought this was so likely to happen, that I had turned the thing over in my mind in expectation. So as soon as this letter reached me, I wrote a note to Croker to this effect, — that I would not write odes as boys write exercises, at stated times and upon stated subjects; but that if it were understood that upon great public events I might either write or be silent as the spirit moved, I should now accept the office as an honourable distinction, which under those circumstances it would become. To-morrow I shall see him. The salary is but a nominal 120*l.*; and, as you see, I shall either reject it, or make the title honourable by accepting it upon my own terms. The latter is the most probable result.

. . . . . .

"No doubt I shall be the better on my return for this course of full exercise and full feeding, which follows in natural order. By good fortune this is the oyster season, and when in town I devour about a dozen in the middle of the day; so that in the history of my life this year ought to be designated as the year of the oysters, inasmuch as I shall have feasted on them more than in any other year of my life. I shall work off the old flesh from my bones, and lay on a new layer in its place, — a sort of renovation which makes meat better, and therefore will not make me the worse. Harry complains of me as a

general disturber of all families. I am up first in the house here and at his quarters; and the other morning when I walked from hence to breakfast with Grosvenor, I arrived before anybody except the servants were up. This is as it should be. . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq.

"Streatham, Sept. 20. 1813.

"My dear Wynn,

"I saw your letter about the Laurel, and you will not be sorry to hear how completely I had acted in conformity with your opinion.

"Pye's death was announced a day or two before my departure from Keswick, and at the time I thought it so probable that the not-very-desirable succession might be offered me, as to bestow a little serious thought upon the subject, as well as a jest or two. On my arrival in town Bedford came to my brother's to meet me at breakfast; told me that Croker had spoken with him about it, and he with Gifford; that they supposed the *onus* of the office would be dropt, or if it were not, that I might so execute it as to give it a new character; and that as *detur digniori* was the maxim upon which the thing was likely to be bestowed, they thought it would become me to accept it. My business, however, whatever might be my determination, was to call without delay at the Admiralty, thank C. for what

was actually intended well, and learn how the matter stood.

"Accordingly I called on Croker. He had spoken to the Prince; and the Prince observing that I had written 'some good things in favour of the Spaniards,' said the office should be given me. You will admire the reason; and infer from it that I ought to have been made historiographer because I had written Madoc. Presently Croker meets Lord Liverpool, and tells him what had passed; Lord Liverpool expressed his sorrow that he had not known it a day sooner, for he and the Marquis of Hertford had consulted together upon whom the vacant honour could most properly be bestowed. Scott was the greatest poet of the day, and to Scott therefore they had written to offer it. The Prince was displeased at this; though he said he ought to have been consulted, it was his pleasure that I should have it, and have it I should. Upon this Croker represented that he was Scott's friend as well as mine, that Scott and I were upon friendly terms; and for the sake of all three he requested that the business might rest where it was.

"Thus it stood when I made my first call at the Admiralty. I more than half suspected that Scott would decline the offer, and my own mind was made up before this suspicion was verified. The manner in which Scott declined it was the handsomest possible; nothing could be more friendly to me, or more honourable to himself. God bless you!

Yours very affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Mrs. Southey.

"Tuesday night, Sept. 28. 1813.

"My dear Edith.

"I have stolen away from a room full of people, that I might spend an hour in writing to you instead of wasting it at the card-table. Sunday I went by appointment to Lord William Gordon, who wanted to take me to see a young lady. Who should this prove to be but Miss Booth; the very actress whom we saw at Liverpool play so sweetly in Kotzebue's comedy of the Birth-day. There was I taken to hear her recite Mary the Maid of the Inn! and if I had not interfered in aid of her own better sense, Lord W. and her mother and sisters would have made her act as well as recite it. As I know you defy the monster, I may venture to say that she is a sweet little girl, though a little spoilt by circumstances which would injure anybody; but what think you of this old lord asking permission for me to repeat my visit, and urging me to 'take her under my protection,' and show her what to recite, and instruct her how to recite it? And all this upon a Sunday! So I shall give her a book, and tell her what parts she should choose to appear in. And if she goes again to Edinburgh, be civil to her if she touches at the Lakes; she supports a mother and brother, and two or three sisters. When I returned to Queen Anne Street from the visit, I found Davy sitting with the Doctor, and awaiting my return. I could not dine with him to-morrow,

having an engagement, but we promised to go in the evening and take Coleridge with us, and Elmsley, if they would go. It will be a party of lions, where the Doctor must for that evening perform the part of Daniel in the lion's den.

"I dined on Sunday at Holland House, with some eighteen or twenty persons. Sharp was there, who introduced me with all due form to Rogers and to Sir James Mackintosh, who seems to be in a bad state of health. In the evening Lord Byron came in.* He had asked Rogers if I was 'magnanimous,' and requested him to make for him all sorts of amends honourable for having tried his wit upon me at the expense of his discretion; and in full confidence of the success of the apology, had been provided with a letter of introduction to me in case he had gone to the Lakes, as he intended to have done. As for me, you know how I regard things of this kind; so we met with all becoming courtesy on both sides, and I saw a man whom in voice, manner, and countenance I liked very much more than either his character or his writings had given me reason to expect. Rogers wanted me to dine with him on Tuesday (this day): only Lord Byron and Sharp were to have been of the party, but I had a pending engagement here, and was sorry for it.

"Holland House is a most interesting building.

* The following is Lord Byron's account of this meeting:—"Yesterday, at Holland House, I was introduced to Southey, the best looking bard I have seen for some time. To have that poet's head and shoulders I would almost have written his Sapphics. He is certainly a prepossessing-looking person to look at, and a man of talent and all that, and—*there* is his eulogy."—*Life of Byron*, vol. ii. p. 244.

The library is a sort of gallery, 109 feet in length; and, like my study, serves for drawing-room also. The dinner-room is pannelled with wood, and the pannels emblazoned with coats of arms, like the ceiling of one room in the palace at Cintra. The house is of Henry the Eighth's time. Good night, my dear Edith.

"We had a very pleasant dinner at Madame de Stael's. Davy and his wife, a Frenchman whose name I never heard, and the Portuguese ambassador, the Conde de Palmella, a gentlemanly and accomplished man. I wish you had seen the animation with which she exclaimed against Davy and Mackintosh for their notions about peace.

"Once more farewell!

R. SOUTHEY."

The following poetical announcement of his being actually installed may excite a smile: —

"I have something to tell you, which you will not be sorry at,
'Tis that I am sworn in to the office of Laureat.
The oath that I took there could be nothing wrong in,
'Twas to do all the duties to the dignity belonging.
Keep this, I pray you, as a precious gem,
For this is the Laureat's first poem.

"There, my dear Edith, are some choice verses for you. I composed them in St. James's Park yesterday, on my way from the Chamberlain's office, where a good old gentleman usher, a worthy sort of fat old man in a wig and bag and a snuff coloured full dress suit with cut steel buttons and a sword, administered an oath." . . . .

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"London, Nov. 5. 1813.

"My dear Scott,

"If you have not guessed at the reason why your letter has lain ten weeks unanswered, you must have thought me a very thankless and graceless fellow, and very undeserving of such a letter. I waited from day to day that I might tell you all was completed, and my patience was nearly exhausted in the process. Let me tell you the whole history in due order, before I express my feelings towards you upon the occasion. Upon receiving yours I wrote to Croker, saying that the time was passed when I could write verses upon demand, but that if it were understood that, instead of the old formalities, I might be at liberty to write upon great public events or to be silent, as the spirit moved,—in that case the office would become a mark of honourable distinction, and I should be proud of accepting it. How this was to be managed he best knew; for, of course, it was not for me to propose terms to the Prince. When next I saw him he told me that, after the appointment was completed, he or some other person in the Prince's confidence, would suggest to him the fitness of making this reform, in an office which requires some reform to rescue it from the contempt into which it had fallen. I thought all was settled, and expected every day to receive some official communication, but week after week past on. My head-quarters at this time were at Streatham.* Going one

* His uncle, Mr. Hill, was then rector of that parish.

day into town to my brothers, I found that Lord William Gordon, with whom I had left a card on my first arrival, had called three times on me in as many days, and had that morning requested that I would call on him at eleven, twelve, one, or two o'clock. I went accordingly, never dreaming of what this business could be, and wondering at it. He told me that the Marquis of Hertford was his brother-in-law, and had written to him, as being my neighbour in the country, — placing, in fact, the appointment at his (Lord William's) disposal, wherefore he wished to see me to know if I wished to have it. The meaning of all this was easily seen; I was very willing to thank one person more, and especially a good-natured man, to whom I am indebted for many neighbourly civilities. He assured me that I should now soon hear from the Chamberlain's office, and I departed accordingly, in full expectation that two or three days more would settle the affair. But neither days nor weeks brought any further intelligence; and if plenty of employments and avocations had not filled up my mind as well as my time, I should perhaps have taken dudgeon, and returned to my family and pursuits, from which I had so long been absent.

"At length, after sundry ineffectual attempts, owing sometimes to his absence, and once or twice to public business, I saw Croker once more, and he discovered for me that the delay originated in a desire of Lord Hertford's that Lord Liverpool should write to him, and ask the office for me. This calling in the Prime Minister about the disposal of an office,

the net emoluments of which are about 90*l.* a-year, reminded me of the old proverb about shearing pigs. Lord Liverpool, however, was informed of this by Croker; the letter was written, and in the course of another week Lord Hertford wrote to Croker that he would give orders for making out the appointment. A letter soon followed to say that the order was given, and that I might be sworn in whenever I pleased. My pleasure, however, was the last thing to be consulted. After due inquiry on my part, and some additional delays, I received a note to say that if I would attend at the Chamberlain's office at one o'clock on Thursday, November 4., a gentleman-usher would be there to administer the oath. Now it so happened that I was engaged to go to Woburn on the Tuesday, meaning to return on Thursday to dinner, or remain a day longer, as I might feel disposed. Down I went to the office, and solicited a change in the day; but this was in vain, the gentleman-usher had been spoken to, and a Poet-Laureate is a creature of a lower description. I obtained, however, two hours' grace; and yesterday, by rising by candlelight and hurrying the postboys, reached the office to the minute. I swore to be a faithful servant to the King, to reveal all treasons which might come to my knowledge, to discharge the duties of my office, and to obey the Lord Chamberlain in all matters of the King's service, and in his stead the Vice-Chamberlain. Having taken this upon my soul, I was thereby inducted into all the rights, privileges, and benefits which Henry James Pye, Esq., did enjoy, or ought to have enjoyed.

"The original salary of the office was 100 marks. It was raised for Ben Jonson to 100*l.* and a tierce of Spanish canary wine, now wickedly commuted for 26*l.*; which said sum, unlike the canary, is subject to income-tax, land-tax, and heaven knows what taxes besides. The whole net income is little more or less than 90*l.* It comes to me as a Godsend, and I have vested it in a life-policy: by making it up 102*l.* it covers an insurance for 3000*l.* upon my own life. I have never felt any painful anxiety as to providing for my family, — my mind is too buoyant, my animal spirits too good, for this care ever to have affected my happiness; and I may add that a not unbecoming trust in Providence has ever supported my confidence in myself. But it is with the deepest feeling of thanksgiving that I have secured this legacy for my wife and children, and it is to you that I am primarily and chiefly indebted.

"To the manner of your letter I am quite unable to reply. We shall both be remembered hereafter, and ill betide him who shall institute a comparison between us. There has been no race; we have both got to the top of the hill by different paths, and meet there not as rivals but as friends, each rejoicing in the success of the other.

"I wait for the levee, and hope to find a place in the mail for Penrith on the evening after it, for I have the Swiss malady, and am home-sick. Remember me to Mrs. Scott and your daughter; and believe me, my dear Scott,

Most truly and affectionately yours,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE LAUREAT'S FIRST ODE. — RESTRICTIONS UPON HIS FREEDOM OF SPEECH. — COMPLAINTS OF GIFFORD'S CORRECTIONS. — BONAPARTE. — CONDUCT OF THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT TOWARDS HOFER. — ANXIETY RESPECTING HIS CHILDREN'S HEALTH. — THINKS OF AN ODE ON THE EXPECTED MARRIAGE OF THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE. — REPULSE OF THE BRITISH AT BERGEN-OP-ZOOM. — QUOTATION FROM GEORGE GASCOIGNE CONCERNING THE DUTCH. — FEELINGS ON THE NEWS OF THE SUCCESS OF THE ALLIED ARMIES. — POETICAL PLANS. — LORD BYRON'S ODE TO BONAPARTE. — REMARKS ON MATHEMATICAL STUDIES. — ON CLERICAL DUTIES. — RIDICULOUS POEM. — PORTRAIT AND MEMOIR WANTED. — LAUREATE ODES. — SPANISH AFFAIRS. — HUMBOLDT'S TRAVELS. — RODERICK. — MR. COLERIDGE. — DOMESTIC ANXIETIES. — ADVICE ON COLLEGE STUDIES. — CHILDREN'S JOY. — HOSPITALS BADLY CONDUCTED. — POLITICAL SPECULATIONS. — BARNARD BARTON. — MR. WORDSWORTH'S LAST POEM. — LITERARY PLANS. — THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD. — LAUREATE ODES STILL REQUIRED. — FOREIGN POLITICS. — MR. CANNING. — HISTORY OF BRAZIL. — EXPECTS NOTHING FROM GOVERNMENT. — A CRAZY COMPOSITOR. — GRAVE OF RONSARD AT TOURS. — RODERICK. — OLIVER NEWMAN. — THOUGHT OF DEATH. — BONAPARTE. — HISTORY OF BRAZIL. — NEW YEAR'S ODE EXPECTED. — THE PROPERTY-TAX. — THE SQUID HOUND. — LORD BYRON. — RODERICK. — DIFFICULTIES OF REMOVAL. — INSCRIPTIONS AND EPITAPHS. — EVIL OF GOING TO INDIA. — MURAT. — HISTORY OF PORTUGAL. — HIS SON'S STUDIES. — DR. BELL'S LUDUS LITERARIUS. — QUESTION OF MARRIAGE WITH A WIFE'S SISTER. — REJOICINGS AT THE NEWS OF THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO. — 1814—1815.

My father had now received that title which, insignificant as it has usually been in literary history,

and, even in the case of its worthiest holders, little thought of, seemed, if I do not err, with him to acquire a new importance, and — whether for good or evil, whether in honour or in opprobrium, — to live in the mouths of men.

The new Laureat, notwithstanding his wishes and intentions of emancipating the office from its thraldom, was bound precisely by the same rules and etiquette as his predecessors. He had, indeed, as he has stated, expressed a wish to Mr. Croker that it might be placed upon a footing which would exact from the holder nothing like a schoolboy's task, but leave him to write when and in what manner he thought best, and thus render the office as honourable as it was originally designed to be; and it had been replied that some proper opportunity might be found for representing the matter to the Prince in its proper light. This, however, probably from various causes, was never done; and, in the very first instance of official composition, he was doomed to feel the inconvenience of writing to meet the taste of those in power. The time, indeed, was most favourable to him: he could combine a work intended as a specimen of his fulfilment of the Laureat's duties with the expression of his warmest feelings of patriotic exultation. But there was a drawback: his feelings, on one point at least, far outran the calmness of the temperament authorised in high places. It appeared that he might rejoice for England, and Spain, and Wellington, but he must not pour out the vials of his wrath upon France and Bonaparte.

This he had done liberally in the first draft of his

first ode, the Carmen Triumphale for the commencement of the new year; but, having sent it, in MS., to Mr. Rickman, his cooler judgment suggested that there might be an impropriety in some parts of it appearing as the Poet Laureat's production. "I am not sure," he says, "that you do not forget that *office* imposes upon a man many restraints besides the one day's bag and sword at Carlton House. Put the case that, through the mediation of Austria, we make peace with Bonaparte, and he becomes, of course, *a friendly power;* — can you stay in office this Carmen remaining on record?"

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Keswick, Dec. 17. 1813.

"My dear Rickman,

"I thank you for your letter, and, in consequence of it, immediately transcribed the Carmen, and sent it to Mr. Croker. It had never occurred to me that anything of an official character could be attached to it, or that any other reserve was necessary than that of not saying anything which might be offensive to the Government; *e. g.*, in 1808 the Poet Laureat would be expected not to write in praise of Mrs. Clarke and the resignation of the Duke of York. I dare say you are right, and I am prepared to expect a letter from Mr. Croker, advising the suppression of anything discourteous towards Bonaparte. In that case, I shall, probably, add something to that part of the poem respecting Hanover and Hol-

land, and send the maledictory stanzas to the Courier without a name. By the by, if the Government did not feel as I do, the Courier would not hoist Bourbon colours, as it has lately done. . . . . .

"As for the Morning Chronicle, I defy the devil and all his works. My malice has —— and —— for its objects, and the stanza was intended as a peg upon which to hang certain extracts from the Edinburgh Review, and a remark upon the happy vein of prophecy which these worthies have displayed. With respect to attacks from that quarter, I shall be abused of course, and if there is a certain portion of abuse to be bestowed upon anybody, it may better fall upon me than almost any other person; for, in the first place, I shall see very little of it, and, in the next, care no farther for what I may happen to see than just mentally to acknowledge myself as so much in debt. . . . .

Farewell!

R. S."

To the Rev. Herbert Hill.

"Keswick, Dec. 28. 1813.

"My dear Uncle,

. . . . . .

"I am sorely out of humour with public affairs. One of our politicians (Mr. Canning, I believe) called Bonaparte once the child of Jacobinism; but, whether Jacobinism or anything worse bred him, it is this country that has nursed him up to his present

fortunes. After the murders of the Duc d'Enghien and Palm, — avowed, open, notorious as they were, — we ought to have made the war personal against a wretch who was under the ban of humanity. Had this been our constant language, he would long since have been destroyed by the French themselves; nor do I think that Austria would ever have connected itself by marriage with a man so branded. But it is impossible to make the statesmen of this country feel where their strength lies. It will be no merit of theirs if peace is not made, morally certain as every man, who sees an inch before his nose, must be, that it would last no longer than it serves this villain's purpose. He will get back his officers and men, who are now prisoners upon the Continent; he will build fleets; he will train sailors; he will bring sailors from America, and send ships there, and we shall have to renew the contest at his time, and with every advantage on his side.

"I spoilt my poem, in deference to Rickman's judgment and Croker's advice, by cutting out all that related to Bonaparte, and which gave strength, purport, and coherence to the whole. Perhaps I may discharge my conscience by putting these rejected parts together *, and letting them off in the Courier before it becomes a libellous offence to call murder and tyranny by their proper names.

"You will see that I have announced a series of inscriptions recording the achievements of our army

* These, with some additions, are published in the collected edition of his poems, under the title of an "Ode written during the Negotiations with Bonaparte in Jan. 1814."

in the Peninsula. Though this is not exactly *ex officio*, yet I should not have thought of it if it had not seemed a fit official undertaking. This style of composition is that to which I am more inclined than to any other. My local knowledge will turn to good account on many of these epigrammata.

"I had a letter a day or two ago from Kinder who is at this time forming a commercial establishment at St. Andero. The Spanish troops, he says, had behaved so ill that Lord W. had ordered them all within their own frontier. From the specimens which he had seen, he thought they combined a blacker assemblage of diabolical qualities than any set of men whom he ever before had an opportunity of observing. Now Kinder is a cool, clear-headed man, disposed to see things in their best colours, and, moreover, has been in Brazil and Buenos Ayres. The truth seems to be that, though there never was much law in Spain, there has been none during the last six years, and the ruffian-like propensities of the brute multitude have had their full swing. Kinder had been to the scene of action, and dined frequently at head-quarters. He finds Biscay more beautiful than he expected, but has seen nothing to equal the Vale of Keswick. I shall make use of him to get books from Madrid. My friend Abella is one of the deputies for Aragon to the New Cortes.

"The South Sea missionaries have done something at last besides making better books than their Jesuit forerunners. They have converted the King of Otaheité. His letters are in my last Evangelical Magazine, and very curious they are. If he should

prove conqueror in the civil war which is desolating the island, this conversion may, very probably, lead to its complete civilisation. Human sacrifices would, of course, be abolished, and schools established. His Majesty himself writes a remarkably good hand. .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq.

"Jan. 15. 1814.

"My dear Wynn,

"One of our poets says, 'A dram of sweet is worth a pound of sour,' which, if it be not good poetry, is sound practical wisdom. I assure you you have gone far towards reconciling me to the Carmen, by praising the Dutch stanza, of which I had conceived the only qualification to be, that it was as flat as the country of which it treated, as dead as the water of the ditches, and as heavy astern as the inhabitants. How often have I had occasion to remember the old apologue of the painter, who hung up his picture for public criticism! The conclusion also, laus Deo! has found favour in your eyes.

"I have added three stanzas to the five which were struck out, and made them into a whole, which is gone, *sine nomine*, to the Courier, where you will be likely to see it sooner than if I were to transcribe the excerpts.

"There was another stanza, which I expunged myself, because it spoke with bitterness of those

"Who deemed that Spain
Would bow her neck before the intruder's throne;

and I should have been sorry to have had it applied in a manner to have wounded you, its direction being against the Edinburgh Review. Upon this point your remarks have in no degree affected my opinion, either as to the propriety of the attack itself, or of the place for it. However rash I may be, you will, I think, allow that my disposition is sufficiently placable. I continued upon courteous terms with Jeffrey, till that rascally attack upon the Register, in which he recommended it for prosecution. As for the retaliation of which you are apprehensive, do not suppose, my dear Wynn, that one who has never feared to speak his opinions sincerely, can have any fear of being confronted with his former self? I was a republican; I should be so still, if I thought we were advanced enough in civilisation for such a form of society; and the more my feelings, my judgment, my old prejudices might incline me that way, the deeper would necessarily be my hatred of Bonaparte. Do you know that the Anti-Jacobin treats my Life of Nelson as infected with the leaven of Jacobinism?

"If I were conscious of having been at any time swayed in the profession of my opinions by private or interested motives, then indeed might I fear what malice could do against me. True it is that I am a pensioner and Poet Laureat. I owe the pension to you, the laurel to the Spaniards. Whether the former has prevented me from speaking as I felt upon the measures of Government, where I thought myself called upon to speak at all, let my volumes of

the Register bear witness. The Whigs who attack me for celebrating our victories in Spain, ought to expunge from the list of their toasts that which gives 'The cause of Liberty all the world over.' The Inscriptions are for the battles we have won, the towns we have retaken, and epitaphs for those who have fallen, — that is, for as many of them as I can find anything about whose rank or ability distinguished them.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Jan. 29. 1814.

"My dear, Grosvenor,

"I hope you have secured the manuscript of my article on the Dissenters, in which I suspect Gifford has done more mischief than usual. Merely in cutting open the leaves, I perceived some omissions which one would think the very demon of stupidity had prompted. You may remember the manner in which I had illustrated Messrs. Bogue and Bennet's mention of Paul and Timothy. He has retained the quotation, and cut out the comment upon it. I believe the article has lost about two pages in this way. The only other instances which caught my eye will show you the spirit in which he has gone to work. Bogue and Bennet claim Milton, Defoe, &c. as Dissenters. I called them blockheads for not perceiving that it was 'to their *catholic* and *cosmopolite* intellect' that these men owed their immortality, not to

their *sectarian* opinions, and the exterminating pen has gone through the words catholic and cosmopolite. There is also a foolish insertion stuck in, to introduce the last paragraph, which at once alters it, and says, 'Now I am going to say something fine,' instead of letting the feeling rise at once from the subject. It is well, perhaps, that the convenience of this quarterly incoming makes me placable, or I should some day tell Gifford, that though I have nothing to say against any omission which may be made for political or prudential motives, yet when the question comes to be a mere matter of opinion in regard to the wording of a sentence, my judgment is quite as likely to be right as his. You will really render me a great service by preserving my manuscript reviewals: for some of these articles may most probably be reprinted whenever my operas come to be printed in a collected form after I am gone, and these rejected passages will then be thought of most value.

"I wish you would, as soon as you can, call on Gifford, and tell him, — not what I have been saying, for I have got rid of my gall in thus letting you know what I feel upon the subject, — but that I will review Duppa's pamphlet about Junius, and the Memoirs, for his next number. Perhaps I may succeed in this, as, in approaching Junius, I shall take rather a wider view of political morality than he and his admirers have done.

"Some unknown author has sent me a poem called the Missionary, not well arranged, but written with great feeling and beauty. I shall very likely do him

a good turn in the Quarterly. It is Ercilla's groundwork, with a new story made to fit the leading facts.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Walter Savage Lander, Esq.

"Keswick, March 9. 1814.

"Did you see my ode in the Courier, beginning,

'Who calls for peace at this momentous hour?' &c.:

it grew out of the omitted portion of the Carmen Triumphale, wherein I could not say all I wished and wanted to say, because a sort of official character attached to it. For five years I have been preaching the policy, the duty, the necessity of declaring Bonaparte under the ban of human nature; and if this had been done in 1808, when the Bayonne iniquity was fresh in the feelings of the public, I believe that the Emperor of Austria could never have given him his daughter in marriage; be that as it may, Spain and Portugal would have joined us in the declaration; the terms of our alliance would have been never to make peace with him; and France, knowing this, would, ere this, have delivered herself from him. My present hope is that he will require terms of peace to which the allies will not consent: a little success is likely enough to inflate him; for he is equally incapable of bearing prosperous or adverse fortunes. As for the Bourbons, I do not wish to see them restored, unless there were no other

means of effecting his overthrow. Restorations are bad things, when the expulsion has taken place from internal causes and not by foreign forces. They have been a detestable race, and the adversity which they have undergone is not of that kind which renovates the intellect, or calls into life the virtues which royalty has stifled. I used to think that the Revolution would not have done its work, till the Houses of Austria and Bourbon were both destroyed, — a consummation which the history of both Houses has taught me devoutly to wish for. Did I ever tell you that Hofer got himself arrested under a false name and thrown into prison at Vienna, and that he was actually turned out of this asylum by the Austrian government? If any member of that government escapes the sword or the halter, there will be a lack of justice in this world. The fact is one of the most shocking in human history, but a fact it is, though it has not got abroad. Adair told it me.

"I shall rejoice to see your Idyllia. The printer is treading close on my heels, and keeping me close to work with this poem. I shall probably send you two sections more in a few days.

R. S."

To Mr. Neville White.

"Keswick, March 18. 1814.

"My dear Neville,

"I am afraid I have been silent for a longer time than has ever before passed without a letter since

our communication began. How truly has it been said that the first twenty years of life are the longest part of it, let it be ever so long extended. Days, weeks, and months now pass away so rapidly and yet so imperceptibly, that I am scarcely sensible of the sum of time which has gone by, till some business stares me in the face which has been left undone.

"It is not, however, from uniformity of happiness that time of late has passed so speedily with me. We have had ailments enough among the children to keep me perpetually anxious for the last eight or ten weeks. These are things which a man hardly understands till they have happened to himself, and even then some are affected more by them and some less; but it is one of the weak parts of my nature to feel them more perhaps than the occasion always justifies. I myself have had my share, though not a very heavy one, of the complaints which the unusual length and obstinacy of the winter scattered so plentifully in these parts. And though I have not been idle, and what I have done might be deemed a sufficient quantity for one who had less to do, the last four months have perhaps produced less than any former ones. I readily acknowledge that it may be fortunate for me to be under the necessity of continually bestirring my faculties in composition, otherwise the pleasure of acquiring knowledge, and continually supplying those deficiencies in my own acquirements, of which they who know most are most sensible in themselves, is so much more delightful than the act of communicating what I already know, that very probably I might fall into this kind of self-indulgence.

"My great poem will not be out before June. I am working hard at it. For the Quarterly I have done little, only Montgomery's poem, and a little Moravian book about the Nicobar Islands. I shall be vexed if the former be either delayed or mutilated.

"This evening's newspaper brings great news. The old desire of my heart,—that of seeing peace dictated before the walls of Paris—seems about to be fulfilled. But what a dreadful business has this been at Bergen-op-Zoom!* This is the consequence of Government deferring to popular opinion when founded upon false grounds. Graham was extolled and rewarded for the battle of Barrosa,—a battle which he ought not to have fought, and which was worse than useless. Government knew this, and felt concerning it as I am now expressing myself. Yet they of course were glad to raise a cry of success, and the Opposition joined it in extolling Graham for the sake of abusing the Spaniards; whereas, in truth, he was infinitely more in fault than La Peña. After the battle he never ought to have been trusted with command.

Believe me, my dear Neville,

Ever yours with the truest regard,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

* "The attempt by the English force under Graham to carry Bergen-op-Zoom (a place of extraordinary strength but inadequately garrisoned) by a coup-de-main, was repulsed, March 8. 1814, with a loss of 900 killed and wounded, and 1800 prisoners; a bloody check, which paralysed the operations of the English." — *Alison.*

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Keswick, March 23. 1814.

"My dear Rickman,

"Your letter* operated well. Like a good boy I began my task immediately after its arrival, and have now completed one part and begun the second, of a poem which is to consist of three. Can you give me a better title than *Carmen Maritale?* I distrust my own Latinity, which has long been disused and never was very good. The poem is in six-lined stanzas; first a proem, so called rather than introduction, that the antiquated word may put the reader in tune for what follows. It is a poet's egotism making the best of the laurel, and passing to the present subject by professing at first an unfitness for it; the second part will be a vision, wherein allegorical personages give good advice; and the concluding part a justification of the serious strain which has been chosen; something about the king; and a fair winding up with a wish that it may be long before the Princess be called upon to exercise the duties of which she has been here reminded. The whole poem 300 to 400 lines,—on which, when they are completed, I will request you to bestow an hour's reading, with a pencil in your hand.

"In George Gascoigne's poem there are many things about the Dutch, showing that the English

* My father had been in doubt as to the likelihood of the Princess Charlotte's marriage with the Prince of Orange, and hesitated whether to commence a poem on that subject.

despised them and despaired of their cause, just as in our days happened to the Spaniards: —

> "'And thus, my lord, your honour may discerne
> Our perils past; and how, in our annoy,
> God saved me (your lordship's bound for ever),
> Who else should not be able now to tell
> The state wherein this country doth persever,
> Ne how they seem in careless minds to dwell
> (So did they erst, and so they will do ever).
> And so, my lord, for to bewray my mind,
> Methinks they be a race of bull-beef borne,
> Whose hearts their butter mollyfieth by kind,
> And so the force of beef is clear outworne.
> And eke their brains with double beer are lined,
> Like sops of browasse puffed up with froth;
> When inwardly they be but hollow geer,
> As weak as wind which with one puff up goeth.
> And yet they brag, and think they have no peer,
> Because Harlem hath hitherto held out;
> Although in deed (as they have suffered Spain)
> The end thereof even now doth rest in doubt.'

"I dearly love a piece of historical poetry like this, which shows how men thought and felt, when history only tells me how they acted.

R. S."

To John May, Esq.

"Keswick, April 25. 1814.

"My dear Friend,

"If the King of France has any stray *cordon bleu* to dispose of here, Herbert has a fair claim to one, having been the first person in Great Britain who mounted the white cockade. He appeared with one immediately upon the news from Bordeaux, and wore it till the news from Paris.* My young ones

* Of the occupation of Paris by the Allied Armies, and the restoration of the Bourbons.

were then all as happy as paper cockades could make them; and, to our great amusement, all the white ribband in Keswick was bought up to follow their example. My own feelings, on the first intelligence, were unlike anything that I ever experienced before, or can experience again. The curtain had fallen after a tragedy of five-and-twenty years. Those persons who had rejoiced most enthusiastically at the beginning of the revolution, were now deeply thankful for a termination which restored things, as nearly as can be, to the state from which they set out. What I said, with a voice of warning, to my own country, is here historically true, — that 'all the intermediate sum of misery is but the bitter price which folly pays for repentance.' The mass of destruction, of wretchedness, and of ruin which that revolution has occasioned, is beyond all calculation. Our conception of it is almost as vague and inadequate as of infinity. This, however, occurred to me at the time less than my own individual history; for I could not but remember how materially the course of my own life had been influenced by that tremendous earthquake, which seemed to break up the great deeps of society, like a moral and political deluge. I have derived nothing but good from it in every thing, except the mere consideration of immediate worldly fortune, which is to me as dust in the balance. Sure I am that under any other course of discipline I should not have possessed half the intellectual powers which I now enjoy, and perhaps not the moral strength. The hopes and the ardour, and the errors and the struggles and the difficulties of my early life

crowded upon my mind; and, above all, there was a deep and grateful sense of that superintending goodness which had made all things work together for good in my fortunes, and will, I firmly believe, in like manner uniformly educe good from evil upon the great scale of human events.

"I fear we shall make a bad peace. Hitherto the people have borne on their governors (I except Prussia, where prince and people have been worthy of each other). The rulers are now left to themselves, and I apprehend consequences which will fall heavy upon posterity, though not, perhaps, upon ourselves. I had rather the French philosophy had left any other of its blessings behind it than its *candour* and its *liberality*. It was very natural that the Emperor of Austria should not choose to have his son-in-law hanged. But here is Alexander breakfasting with Marshal Ney, who, if he had more necks than the Hydra or my Juggernaut*, owes them all to the gallows for his conduct in Galicia and in Portugal. Caulincourt is to have an asylum in Russia, and no doubt will be permitted to choose his latitude there. *Candour* is to make us impute all the enormities which the French have committed to Bonaparte. All the horrors, absolutely unutterable as they are, which you know were perpetrated in Portugal, and which I know were perpetrated in Spain, but which I literally cannot detail in history, because I dare not outrage human nature and common decency by such details, — all these must in *candour* be put out of re-

* See Curse of Kehama, Sect. xiv.

membrance. All was Bonaparte's doing, and the most amiable of nations were his victims rather than his agents, — so this most veracious of nations tells us, and so we are to believe. But if the Devil could not have brought about all the crimes without the Emperor Napoleon, neither could the Emperor Napoleon have discharged the Devil's commission without the most amiable of nations to act up to the full scope of his diabolical desires. At present, I admit, our business is to conciliate and consolidate the counter-revolution. But no visitings to Marshal Ney, no compliments to his worthy colleagues, no asylums for the murderers of the Duc d'Enghien. In treating for peace, liberality will not fail to be urged by the French negotiators as a reason for granting them terms which are inconsistent with the welfare of Europe. Alexander is a weak man, though a good one; and our ministers will be better pleased to hear themselves called liberal by the Opposition, than to be called wise by posterity.

. . . . . .

R. SOUTHEY."

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"Keswick, April 27. 1814.

" My dear Scott,

" Thank God we have seen the end of this long tragedy of five-and-twenty years! The curtain is fallen; and though there is the after-piece of the Devil to Pay to be performed, we have nothing to do

with that: it concerns the performers alone. I wish we had been within reach of a meeting upon the occasion; and yet the first feeling was not a joyous one. Too many recollections crowded upon the mind; and the sudden termination putting an end at once to those hopes and fears and speculations which, for many years past, have made up so large a part of every man's intellectual existence, seemed like a change in life itself. Much as I had desired this event, and fully as I had expected it, still, when it came, it brought with it an awful sense of the instability of all earthly things; and when I remembered that that same newspaper might as probably have brought with it intelligence that peace had been made with Bonaparte, I could not but acknowledge that something more uniform in its operations than human councils had brought about the event. I thought he would set his life upon the last throw, and die game; or that he would kill himself, or that some of his own men would kill him; and though it had long been my conviction that he was a mean-minded villain, still it surprised me that he should live after such a degradation, — after the loss, not merely of empire, but even of his military character. But let him live; if he will write his own history, he will give us all some information, and if he will read mine, it will be some set-off against his crimes.

"I desired Longman to send you the Carmen Triumphale. In the course of this year I shall volunteer verses enough of this kind to entitle me to a fair dispensation for all task work in future. I have made good way through a poem upon the Princess's

marriage in the olden style, consisting of three parts — the Proem, the Dream, and L'Envoy; and I am getting on with the series of Military Inscriptions. The conclusion of peace will, perhaps, require another ode, and I shall then trouble Jeffrey with a few more notes. As yet I know nothing more of his reply than what some sturdy friend in the Times has communicated to me; but I shall not fail to pay all proper attention to it in due season. He may rest assured that I shall pay all my obligations to him with compound interest. The uses of newspapers will for a while seem flat and unprofitable, yet there will be no lack of important matter from abroad; and for acrimonious disputes at home, we shall always be sure of them. I fear we shall be too liberal in making peace. There is no reason why we should make any cessions for pure generosity. It is very true that Louis XVIII. has not been our enemy; but the French nation has, and a most inveterate and formidable one. They should have their sugar islands, but not without paying for them, — and that a good round sum, — to be equally divided between Greenwich and Chelsea, or to form the foundation of a fund for increasing the pay of army and navy.

"I am finishing Roderick, and deliberating what subject to take up next; for as it has pleased you and the Prince to make me Laureate, I am bound to keep up my poetical character. If I do not fix upon a tale of Robin Hood, or a New England story connected with Philip's war, and Goffe the regicide, I shall either go far North or far East for scenery and superstitions, and pursue my old scheme of my my-

thological delineations. Is it not almost time to hear of something from you? I remember to have been greatly delighted when a boy with Amyntor and Theodora, and with Dr. Ogilvie's Rona. The main delight must have been from the scenes into which they carried me. There was a rumour that you were among the Hebrides. I heartily wish it may be true.

"Remember us to Mrs. Scott and your daughter. These children of ours are now growing tall enough, and intelligent enough to remind us forcibly of the lapse of time. Another generation is coming on. You and I, however, are not yet off the stage; and whenever we quit it, it will not be to men who will make a better figure there.

Yours, very affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Mr. Neville White.

"Keswick, April 29. 1814.

"My dear Neville,

"My main employment at present is upon Roderick. The poem is drawing towards its completion; in fact, the difficulty may be considered as over, and yet a good deal of labour remains, for I write slowly and blot much. However, land is in sight, and I feel myself near enough the end of this voyage to find myself often considering upon what course I shall set sail for the next. Something of magnitude I must always have before me to occupy me in the intervals

of other pursuits, and to think of when nothing else requires attention. But I am less determined respecting the subject of my next poem than I ever was before when a vacancy was so near. The New England Quaker story is in most forwardness, but I should prefer something which in its tone of feeling would differ more widely from that on which I am at present busied. As to looking for a *popular* subject, this I shall never do; for, in the first place, I believe it to be quite impossible to say what would be popular, and, secondly, I should not willingly acknowledge to myself, that I was influenced by any other motive than the fitness of my story to my powers of execution.

"The Laureateship will certainly have this effect upon me, that it will make me produce more poetry than I otherwise should have done. For many years I had written little, and was permitting other studies to wean me from it more and more. But it would be unbecoming to accept the only public mark of honour which is attached to the pursuit, and at the same time withdraw from the profession. I am therefore reviving half-forgotten plans, forming new ones, and studying my old masters with almost as much ardour and assiduity as if I were young again. Some of Henry's papers yonder strikingly resemble what I used to do twenty years ago, and what I am beginning to do again.

"Thank you for Lord Byron's Ode*: there is in it, as in all his poems, great life, spirit, and ori-

* Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte.

ginality, though the meaning is not always brought out with sufficient perspicuity. The last time I saw him he asked me if I did not think Bonaparte a great man in his villany. I told him, no, — that he was a mean-minded villain. And Lord Byron has now been brought to the same opinion. But of politics in my next. I shall speedily thank Josiah Conder for his review, and comment a little upon its contents. Some of his own articles please me exceedingly. I wish my coadjutors in the Quarterly had thought half as much upon poetry, and understood it half as well.

"God bless you!

Yours affectionately,

R. SOUTHEY."

To Mr. James White.

"Keswick, May 2. 1814.

"My dear James,

"I am glad to hear from Neville that you are improved in health and spirits. What you say of the inconvenience of mathematical studies to a man who has no inclination for them, no necessity for them, no time to spare for acquiring them, and no use for them when they are acquired, is perfectly true; and I think it was one of the advantages (Heaven knows they were very few) which Oxford used to possess over Cambridge, that a man might take his degree, if he pleased, without knowing anything of the science. A tenth or a fiftieth part of the time employed upon Euclid, would serve to make the under-graduate a

good logician, and logic will stand him in good stead, to whatever profession he may betake himself.

"Your repugnance to the expense of time which this fatiguing study requires, is very natural and very reasonable; and the best comfort I can offer is to remind you that the time will soon come when you will have the pleasure of forgetting all you have learned. Your apprehensions of deficiency in more important things are not so well founded. The Church stands in need of men of various characters and acquirements. She ought to have some sturdy polemics, equally able to attack and to defend. One or two of these are as many as she wants, and as many as she produces in a generation; she cannot do without them, and yet sometimes they do evil as well as good. Horsley was the militant of the last generation; Herbert Marsh of the present. Next to these stiff canonists and sound theologians, she requires some who excel in the *literæ humaniores*, and who may keep up that literary character which J. Taylor, South, Sherlock, Barrow, &c. have raised, and which of late days has certainly declined. Of these a few also are sufficient. There are hardly more than half-a-dozen pulpits in the kingdom in which an eloquent preacher would not be out of his place. Everywhere else, what is required of the preacher is to be plain, perspicuous, and in earnest. If he feels himself, he will make his congregation feel. But it is not in the pulpit that the minister may do most good. He will do infinitely more by living with his parishioners like a pastor; by becoming their confidential adviser, their friend, their comforter;

directing the education of the poor, and, as far as he can, inspecting that of all, which it is not difficult for a man of good sense and gentle disposition to do as an official duty, without giving it, in the slightest degree, the appearance of officious interference. Teach the young what Christianity is; distinguish by noticing and rewarding those who distinguish themselves by their good conduct; see to the wants of the poor, and call upon the charity of the rich, making yourself the channel through which it flows; look that the schools be in good order, that the workhouse is what it ought to be, that the overseers do their duty; be, in short, the active friend of your parishioners. Sunday will then be the least of your labours, and the least important of your duties; and you will very soon find that the time employed in making a sermon, would be better employed in adapting to your congregation a dozen, which your predecessors did not deliver to the press for no other purpose than that they should stand idle upon the shelves of a divinity library. The pulpit is a clergyman's parade, the parish is his field of active service.

Believe me, my dear James,
Yours very affectionately,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"May 9. 1814.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"Here is a choice poem for you, — the production of a man who keeps a billiard-table at Carlisle, and

who, having a genius for poetry, and not daring to show his productions to his wife and daughters, has pitched upon Calvert for his confidant. I give it to you *literatim*, and shall content myself with desiring you not to imagine, from the lyrical abruptness of the beginnings, that the poem is imperfect. It is a whole, and perfect in its kind.

"'Not forgetting Lord Wellington,
When he to Beaudeux came,
The most noble lord was received
With great honour to his name.
The Bourbon cry caled aloud so high,
That it made Paris shake and trimble.
May we all se that shock to be
And make Bonaparte to trimble.
Rise Paris and let us se
Shake off that yoke for liberty.
There is a shake now begun,
Tear it up and pull it down!
May we all united be
In this most noble cause,
To protect our king,
Our country, and our laws.
Lewis haste, heare is a call,
Paris crie is one and all.
Blucher, by his great power,
Will protect the every hour.
May France rejoice and sing,
Long life to Lewis our king.
We Britons will rejoice
To see Lewis made their choice.'

. . . .

"God bless you!

R. SOUTHEY."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"June 5. 1814.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"Another *homo, cui nomen* Colburn, lord of the New Monthly Magazine, has written for my portrait. Now according to all rules of arithmetic (of which I know little) and algebra (of which I know nothing), if a portrait in one magazine be to do me yeoman's service, portraits in two will do the service of two yeomen. So do you answer for me to the European, either by note or letter, offering your drawing, and I will send the *alter homo* to the Doctor to make use of the bust. *Quoad* the biographical sketch, nothing more need be mentioned than that I was born at Bristol, Aug. 12. 1774, — prince and poet having the same birthday, — was of Westminster and afterwards of Balliol College, Oxford, and that my maternal uncle being chaplain of the British Factory at Lisbon, my studies were by that circumstance led towards the literature and history of Portugal and Spain. This is what I shall tell Colburn, and his merry men may dress it up as he pleases.

"But O Grosvenor! I have this day thought of a third 'Portrait of the author,' to be prefixed to the delectable history of Dr. D. D——, to which history I yesterday wrote the preface with a peacock's pen. It is to be the back of the writer, sitting at his desk with his peacock's pen in his hand. As soon as Roderick is finished, which it will very soon be, I think the spirit will move me to spur myself on with

his delicious book by sending it piecemeal to you. Will you enter into a commercial treaty with me, and send Butler in return?

R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Keswick, June 16. 1814.

"My dear Rickman,

"It came into my head that it might peradventure be a fit thing for the Poet-Laureate to write certain verses upon the peace to the personages who are now dragging all London after their horses' heels. I was very well inclined to put the thought out of my head, if some of the very few persons whom I see here had not shown me by their inquiries that it would come into other heads as well as mine. The subjects for their kind were the best possible; so I fell to in good earnest, and have written three odes* in Thalaba's verse. The Carmen was an oration in rhyme. These are odes without rhyme, but in manner and matter altogether lyric. I shall have no time even to correct the press. I have written to Croker, saying that it may be proper to present copies to the persons be-oded, or that such presentations might be improper, and that in my ignorance of such things I requested him to act for me. . . . . .

"I am in some trouble about my old correspondent, Don Manual Abella, a man of letters and a staunch

* To the Prince Regent, the Emperor of Russia, and the King of Prussia.

friend of the old Cortes, though no admirer of the head-over-heels activity of the new ones. I think he is in some danger of coming under a proscription, which seems to make little distinction of persons. That Ferdinand and the constitution could long coexist was not possible. The king was a mere log, and must soon have been treated as such. But he has gone vilely to work; and I will not condemn him *in toto* till it be seen what sort of constitution he means to give the people (*encore une constitution!*). I very much fear that the old system of favouritism will return, and that abominations of every kind will be restored as well as the inquisition, which blessed office, you see, has been re-established, in compliance with the popular cry, as a boon!

"An officer of Suchet's army, who served at the siege of Tarragona, and was afterwards taken by Eroles, was brought here last week by Wordsworth, to whom he had letters of recommendation from France; — a young man, and apparently one of the best of these Frenchmen. He had grace enough to acknowledge that the Spanish business was an unjust one, which he said all the officers knew; and he amused me by complaining that the Spaniards were very hard-hearted. To which I replied that they had not invited him and his countrymen. He said 'they did make beautiful defence;' and I gathered from him some information upon points of consequence.

. . . . . .

"I have sent to the Courier a doggrel March to Moscow, written months ago to amuse the children, and chiefly upon the provocation of an irresistible

rhyme, which is *not* to be printed. I give you the suppressed stanza; for I am sure if you happen to see the song you will wonder how such a hit could have been missed.*

"The Emperor Nap, he talked so loud,
That he frightened Mr. Roscoe;
John Bull, he cries, if you'll be wise,
Ask the Emperor Nap if he will please
To grant you peace upon your knees,
Because he's going to Moscow!
He'll make all the Poles come out of their holes,
And eat the Prussians, and beat the Russians;
The fields are green, and the sky is blue,
Morbleu! Parbleu!
He'll certainly get to Moscow!

"There is some good doggrel in the rest, and Morbleu, &c. is the burden of the song.

. . . . . .

Yours most truly,
R. S."

To Messrs. Longman and Co.

"Keswick, Sept. 3. 1814.

'Dear Sirs,

". . . . I have had a visit from Mr. Canning to-day, who has offered me his good offices in Portugal, and to be the means of any communication with Henry Wellesley at Madrid. This new opening is so much the more acceptable, as my main source of information has been cut off, Abella, I fear, being at this time in prison.

* This stanza is now printed with the rest of the poem.

"The restoration of the Jesuits is a most important measure, and not the least extraordinary of the great events which have lately taken place. This concluding volume of Brazil will be the only single work which contains the whole history of their empire in S. America, and of their persevering struggle against the Indian slave-trade, which was the remote but main cause of their overthrow. I am working at this from manuscript documents, some of which fatigue the sight.

"Murray sent me the other day the two first and two last volumes of your translation of Humboldt, which I shall review. This traveller has so encumbered his volumes with science, that I think you would do well to extract his travels, insert in them the readable part of his other works in their proper place, and thus put the generally interesting part within reach of the reading public. This is what Pinkerton ought to have done. Can you lend me Humboldt's Essay on the Geography of Plants? It must, doubtless, contain some Brazilian information.

Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Joseph Cottle, Esq.

"Keswick, Oct. 17. 1814.

"My dear Cottle,

"It is not long since I heard of you from De Quincey, but I wish you would let me sometimes hear *from you.* There was a time when scarcely a

day passed without my seeing you, and in all that time I do not remember that there ever was a passing coldness between us. The feeling, I am sure, continues; do not, then, let us be so entirely separated by distance, which in cases of correspondence may almost be considered as a mere abstraction. . . .

. . . . . .

"Longman will send you my poem. It has been printed about two months, but he delays its publication till November, for reasons of which he must needs be the best judge. I am neither sanguine about its early, nor doubtful about its ultimate, acceptation in the world. The passion is in a deeper tone than in any of my former works; I call it a tragic poem for this reason; and also that the reader may not expect the same busy and complicated action which the term heroic might seem to promise. The subject has the disadvantage of belonging to an age of which little or no costume has been preserved. I was, therefore, cut off from all adornments of this kind, and had little left me to relieve the stronger parts but description, the best of which is from the life.

. . . . . .

"Can you tell me anything of Coleridge? A few lines of introduction for a son of Mr. ——, of St. James's (in your city), are all that we have received since I saw him last September twelvemonth in town. The children being thus entirely left to chance, I have applied to his brothers at Otley concerning them, and am in hopes through their means, and the aid of other friends, of sending Hartley to

College. Lady Beaumont has promised 30*l.* a year for this purpose, Poole 10*l.* I wrote to Coleridge three or four months ago, telling him that unless he took some steps in providing for this object I must make the application, and required his answer within a given term of three weeks. He received the letter, and in his note by Mr. —— promised to answer it, but he has never taken any further notice of it. I have acted with the advice of Wordsworth. The brothers, as I expected, promise their concurrence, and I daily expect a letter, stating to what amount they will contribute. . . . . .

Believe me, my dear Cottle,
Ever your affectionate old friend,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Mr. Neville White.

"Keswick, Nov. 8. 1814.

"My dear Neville,

". . . . I was *not* sorry that we did not meet at Ambleside merely to take leave. It is one of those things which, since my schoolboy days, I always avoid when I can; there are but too many of these long good-byes in life; and to one who has experienced in the losses you have sustained that fearful uncertainty of life which only experience makes us fully feel and understand, they are very painful. Our repast upon Kirkston * wore a good face of cheerfulness; but I could not help feeling

* A mountain pass leading from Ambleside to Patterdale.

how soon we were to separate, and how doubtful it was that the whole of the party would ever be assembled together again. . . . . .

. . . . . .

After our return Isabel was seized with a severe attack, and was brought to the very brink of the grave. I so verily expected to lose her, that I thought at one moment I had seen her for the last time. There are heavier afflictions than this, but none keener; and the joy and thankfulness which attend on recovery are proportionately intense. She has not yet regained her strength; but every day is restoring her, God be thanked.

"I am glad you have seen these children. . . . If, by God's blessing, my life should be prolonged till they are grown up, I have no doubt of providing for them; and if Herbert's life be spared, he has every thing which can be required to make his name a good inheritance to him. . . . . .

"O dear Neville! how unendurable would life be if it were not for the belief that we shall meet again in a better state of existence. I do not know that person who is happier than myself, and who has more reason to be happy; and never was man more habitually cheerful; but this belief is the root which gives life to all, and holds all fast. God bless you!

Yours very affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Mr. James White.

"Keswick, Nov. 11. 1814.

"My dear James,

"I am grieved to learn from Neville that you are distressing yourself about what I could find in my heart to call these cursed examinations.* There are few things of which I am more thoroughly convinced, than that the system of feeding-up young men like so many game cocks for a sort of intellectual *long-main* is every way pernicious.

"University honours are like provincial tokens, not current beyond the narrow limits of the district in which they are coined; and even where they pass current they are not the only currency, nor the best. Doubtless there are many men at Cambridge in high repute, who have taken no honours and gained no prizes: and should you yourself stand for a fellowship or take pupils, you will find the opinion of what you *might have done,* will act as well in your favour as if your acquirements had received the seal and stamp of approbation in the Senate House. Content yourself with graduating among the many; and remember that the first duty which you have to perform is that of keeping yourself, as far as it can depend upon yourself, in sound health of body and mind, both for your own sake and for the sake of those who are most dear to you. If I were near you I would rid you of these blue devils. When I

* This is strong language; but it might well be used to the brother of poor Kirke White: who, urged by exhortations, and kept up by stimulants, won in the race, and — died.

was about eighteen I made Epictetus literally my manual for some twelvemonths, and by that wholesome course of stoicism counteracted the mischief which I might else have incurred from a passionate admiration of Werter and Rousseau. His tonics agreed with me; and if the old Grecian could know how impassible I have ever since felt myself to the τὰ οὐκ ἐφ' ἡμῖν, he would be well satisfied with the effect of his lessons. It is not your fault that these university distinctions have a local and temporary value, but it is your fault if you do not consider how local and how temporary that value is; and if you suffer yourself to be agitated by any losses and fears concerning what is worth so little. My dear James, in this matter, follow, in the strict interpretation of the words, the advice of Boethius, —

> 'Pelle timorem,
> Spemque fugato.'

"Remember that you only want your degree as a passport: content yourself with simply taking it; and if you are disposed to revenge yourself afterwards by burning your mathematical books and instruments, bring them with you to Keswick when next you make us a visit, and I will assist at the auto-da-fè. We will dine by the side of the Lake, and light our fire with Euclid.

"Neville was more fortunate than you in his excursion to this land of loveliness. He had delightful weather, and he made the most of it. Never had we a more indefatigable guest, nor one who enjoyed the country more heartily. Since his return, Neville-

like, he has loaded us with presents; and no children were ever happier than these young ones were when the expected box made its appearance. I happened to be passing the evening at the Island with General Peachey when it arrived, and they one and all laid their injunctions upon their mother not to tell me what each had received, that they might surprise me with the sight in the morning. Accordingly, no sooner was my door opened in the morning than the whole swarm were in an uproar, buzzing about me. In an evil moment I had begun to shave myself; before the operation was half over, Edith with her work-box was on one side, Herbert with his books on the other, — Bertha was displaying one treasure, Kate another, and little Isabel, jigging for delight in the midst of them, was crying out *mine — mine — Mitter White* — and holding up a box of Tunbridge ware. My poor chin suffered for all this, and the scene would have made no bad subject for Wilkie or Bird. God bless you!

Your affectionate friend,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Dr. Gooch.

"Keswick, Nov. 30. 1814.

"My dear Gooch,

"Your letter reminds me that I have something to ask of you. You may remember telling me of a sailor in Yarmouth Hospital, after Nelson's battle at Copenhagen (if I recollect rightly), whom you at-

tended, and who died in consequence of neglect after you had ceased to attend him, but expressed his delight at seeing you before he died. Though I have not forgotten, and could not forget the circumstances, I have acquired a sort of passion for authenticity upon all points where it is attainable, and you will oblige me by relating the particulars. I am about to compose a paper for the Quarterly, the text for which will be taken from the Reports of the *Poor Society*, and the object of which is to show what has been done in this country towards lessening the quantum of human suffering, and what remains to do. In treating of prevention, correction, and alleviation, I shall have to treat of schools, prisons, and hospitals; and respecting hospitals, must quote the saying of a Frenchman whom Louis XVI. sent over to England to inquire into the manner in which they were conducted. He praised them as they deserved, but added, *Mais il y manque deux choses, nos curés, et nos hospitalières.* And here, with due caution respecting *place*, &c., I wish to tell your story.

"I am fully convinced that a gradual improvement is going on in the world, has been going on from its commencement, and will continue till the human race shall attain all the perfection of which it is capable in this mortal state. This belief grows out of knowledge; that is, it is a corollary deduced from the whole history of mankind. It is no little pleasure to believe that in no age has this improvement proceeded so rapidly as in the present, and that there never was so great a disposition to promote it in those

who have the power. The disposition, indeed, is alloyed with much weakness and much superstition; and God knows there are many disturbing powers at work. But much has been done, more is doing, and nothing can be of more importance than giving this disposition a good direction. Perceval's death was one of the severest losses that England has ever sustained. He was a man who not only desired to act well, but desired it ardently; his heart always strengthened his understanding, and gave him that power which rose always to the measure of the occasion. Lord Liverpool is a cold man; you may convince his understanding, but you can only obtain an inert assent, where zealous co-operation is wanted. It is, however, enough for *us* to know *what* ought to be done: the *how* and the *when* are in the hands of One who knows when and how it may be done best. Oh! if this world of ours were but well cultivated, and weeded well, how like the garden of Eden might it be made! Its evils might almost be reduced to physical suffering and death; the former continually diminishing, and the latter, always indeed an awful thing, but yet to be converted into hope and joy.

"I am much better pleased with ——'s choice than if he had made a more ambitious alliance. Give me neither riches nor poverty, said the Wise Man. Lead us not into temptation is one of the few petitions of that prayer which comprises all that we need to ask: riches always lead that way.

"Why have you not been to visit Joanna Southcote? If I had been less occupied, I should have

requested you to go, not for the sake of a professional opinion (Dr. Simms having satisfied me upon that score), but that you might have got at some of the mythology, and ascertained how much was imposture, and how much delusion. Gregoire has published a Histoire des Sectes, in two volumes, beginning with the last century. I shall review it as a second part to the article upon the Dissenters.

"You have in Roderick the best which I have done, and, probably, the best that I shall do, which is rather a melancholy feeling for the author. My powers, I hope, are not yet verging upon decay, but I have no right to expect any increase or improvement, short as they are of what they might have been, and of what I might have hoped to make them. Perhaps I shall never venture upon another poem of equal extent, and in so deep a strain. It will affect you more than Madoc, because it is pitched in a higher key. I am growing old, the grey hairs thicken upon me, my joints are less supple, and, in mind as well as body, I am less enterprising than in former years. When the thought of any new undertaking occurs, the question, shall I live to complete what I have already undertaken? occurs also. My next poem will be, 'A Tale of Paraguay,' about a thousand lines only in length. Its object will be to plant the grave with flowers, and wreathe a chaplet for the angel of death. If you suspect, from all this, that I suffer any diminution of my usual happy spirits, you will be mistaken. God bless you!

R. S."

To Bernard Barton, Esq.

"Keswick, Dec. 19. 1814.

"My dear Sir,

"You will wonder at not having received my thanks for your metrical effusions; but you will acquit me of all incivility when you hear that the book did not reach me till this morning, and that I have now laid it down after a full perusal.

"I have read your poems with much pleasure, those with most which speak most of your own feelings. Have I not seen some of them in the Monthly Magazine?

"Wordsworth's residence and mine are fifteen miles asunder, a sufficient distance to preclude any frequent interchange of visits. I have known him nearly twenty years, and, for about half that time, intimately. The strength and the character of his mind you see in the Excursion, and his life does not belie his writings, for, in every relation of life, and every point of view, he is a truly exemplary and admirable man. In conversation he is powerful beyond any of his contemporaries; and, as a poet, — I speak not from the partiality of friendship, nor because we have been so absurdly held up as both writing upon one concerted system of poetry, but with the most deliberate exercise of impartial judgment whereof I am capable, when I declare my full conviction that posterity will rank him with Milton. . . . . .

"You wish the metrical tales were republished; they are at this time in the press, incorporated with

my other minor poems, in three volumes. *Nos hæc novimus esse nihil* may serve as motto for them all.

"Do not suffer my projected Quaker poem to interfere with your intentions respecting William Penn; there is not the slightest reason why it should. Of all great reputations, Penn's is that which has been most the effect of accident. The great action of his life was his turning Quaker; the conspicuous one his behaviour upon his trial. In all that regards Pennsylvania, he has no other merit than that of having followed the principles of the religious community to which he belonged, when his property *happened* to be vested in colonial speculations. The true champion for religious liberty in America was Roger Williams, the first consistent advocate for it in that country, and, perhaps, the first in any one. I hold his memory in veneration. But, because I value religious liberty, I differ from you entirely concerning the Catholic question, and never would intrust any sect with political power whose doctrines are inherently and necessarily intolerant.

Believe me,

Yours with sincere respect,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Dec. 22. 1814.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"If Murray were to offer me 500*l.* for a Register, I certainly should not for a moment hesitate. In-

deed, I know not whether I ought not gladly to catch at the 400*l.*, circumstanced as I am. In that case I should advise him to begin with the Peace, for many reasons. First, because it would be so tremendous an undertaking to bring up the lee-way from the beginning of 1812; and, secondly, because there is a great advantage in commencing with a new era in history. It might be worth while at leisure (if I could possibly procure it) to write the volumes for 1812–13, for the sake of connecting the former volumes with these: but this I should despair of. My history of the Peninsula will include what is to me the most interesting portion, and the only portion which I can do thoroughly as it ought to be done. And, more than all, however I might spirit myself up to the undertaking, flesh and blood are not equal to it. I cannot get through more than at present; unless I give up sleep, or the little exercise which I take (and I walk to the Crag* before breakfast); and, that hour excepted, and my meals (barely the meals, for I remain not one minute after them), the pen or the book is always in my hand.

"Had you not better wait for Jeffrey's attack upon Roderick? I have a most curious letter upon this subject from Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, a worthy fellow, and a man of very extraordinary powers. Living in Edinburgh, he thinks Jeffrey the greatest man in the world—an intellectual Bonaparte, whom nobody and nothing can resist. But Hogg, notwithstanding this, has fallen in liking with me, and is a

* A promontory jutting out into Derwentwater, about a mile from Greta Hall.

great admirer of Roderick. And this letter is to request that I will not do anything to *nettle* Jeffrey, while he is deliberating concerning Roderick, for he seems favourably disposed towards me! Morbleu! it is a rich letter! Hogg requested that he himself might review it, and gives me an extract from Jeffrey's answer, refusing him. 'I have, as well as you, a great respect for Southey,' he says; 'but he is a most provoking fellow, and at least as conceited as his neighbour Wordsworth.' But he shall be happy to talk to Hogg upon this and other *kindred* subjects, and he should be very glad to give me a lavish allowance of praise, if I would afford him occasion, &c.; but he must do what he thinks his duty, &c.! I laugh to think of the effect my reply will produce upon Hogg. How it will make every bristle to stand on end like quills upon the fretful porcupine.

"God bless you!

R. S.

"What can I call the ode? Can you find anything to stand with Carmen? Annuum I will not use, nor will I call it Ode for the New Year, for I will do nothing that I can avoid toward perpetuating the custom. How would Carmen Hortatorium do, if there be such a word?"

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"Keswick, Dec. 24. 1814.

"My dear Scott,

"Are you still engaged with the Lord of the Isles, or may I give you joy of a happy deliverance? There are few greater pleasures in life than that of getting fairly through a great work of this kind, and seeing it when it first comes before us in portly form. I envy you the advantage which you always derive from a thorough knowledge of your poetical ground; no man can be more sensible of this advantage than myself, though I have in every instance been led to forego it.

"Longman was to take care that Roderick should be duly conveyed to you. Remember that if you do not duly receive every book which has the name of R. S. in the title-page, the fault lies among the booksellers. My last employment has been an *Odeous* one. I was in good hope that this silly custom had been dispensed with, but on making inquiry through Croker, the reply was that an Ode I must write. It would be as absurd in me to complain of this, as it is in the higher powers to exact it. However, I shall no longer feel myself bound to volunteer upon extraordinary service. I had a ridiculous disappointment about the intended marriage of the Princess Charlotte, which was so mischievously broken off. Willing to be in time, as soon as I was assured that the marriage was to be, I fell to work, and produced some fifty six-lined stanzas, being about half of a

poem in the old manner, which would have done me credit.

"I do not like the aspect of affairs abroad. We make war better than we make peace. In war John Bull's bottom makes amends for the defects of his head; he is a dreadful fellow to take by the horns, but no calf can be more easily led by the nose. Europe was in such a state when Paris was taken, that a commanding intellect, had there been such among the allies, might have cast it into whatever form he pleased. The first business should have been to have reduced France to what she was before Louis XIV.'s time; the second to have created a great power in the north of Germany with Prussia at its head; the third to have consolidated Italy into one kingdom or commonwealth. A fairer opportunity was given us than at the peace of Utrecht, but *moderation* and *generosity* were the order of the day, and with these words we have suffered ourselves to be fooled. Here at home the Talents, with that folly which seems to pursue all their measures like a fatality, are crying out in behalf of Poland and Saxony — the restoration of which would be creating two powerful allies for France; and in America we have both lost time and credit. Of Sir G. Prevost, from his former conduct, I have too good an opinion to condemn him until I have heard his defence; but there has evidently been misconduct somewhere. And at Baltimore I cannot but think that the city would have been taken if poor Ross had not been killed. Confidence is almost everything in war.

"Jeffrey I hear has written what his admirers call a *crushing* review of the Excursion. He might as well seat himself upon Skiddaw and fancy that he crushed the mountain. I heartily wish Wordsworth may one day meet with him, and lay him alongside, yard-arm and yard-arm in argument.

"I saw Canning for an hour or two when he was in this country, and was far more pleased with him than I had expected. He has played his cards ill. In truth I believe that nature made him for something better than a politician. He is gone to a place where I wish I could go. Indeed I should think seriously of going to Spain, if the country were not evidently in a very insecure state. Some of my old Guerilla friends, for want of other occupation, might employ a cartridge upon me. I have still a communication with Madrid, but of course we get no information concerning the real state of things; nor can I guess who is the mover of this mischief. For Ferdinand is a fool, and is moreover exceedingly popular, which seems as if he were a good-natured fool. And a change of ostensible counsellors has produced no change of system. I am much gratified by the compliment the Academy have paid me, and if the Lisbon Academy should follow the example, I should desire no other mark of literary honour. The concluding volume of my Brazil is in the press, and I am closely employed upon it. You will find in it some warfare of the old hearty character, the whole history of the Jesuits in Paraguay, and much curious information respecting the savages. Remem-

ber me to Mrs. Scott and your daughter, and believe me,

Yours very affectionately,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Dec. 29. 1814.

"*Laus Deo!* Peace with America. All difficulty about the Ode is thus terminated, and instead of singing O be joyful! I must set about another. So I shall pen one for the Fiddlers, and alter the other, either to be published separately or with it. Coming extra-officially it cannot be offensive, and, being in the press, it cannot be suppressed without losing the price of the printer's labour.

"As for any such possibilities as those at which you hint, they are so very like impossibilities that I do not know how to distinguish them. For in the first place you may be sure that if the men in power were ever so well disposed toward me, they would think me already liberally remunerated for my literary merits; they cannot know that by gaining a pension of 200*l.* I was actually a loser of 20*l.* a-year; they, if they thought about it at all, would needs suppose that it was a clear addition to my former means, and that if I lived decently before, the addition would enable me to live with ease and comfort. Secondly, they are never likely to think about me, farther than as I may, in pursuing my own principles, happen to fall in with their view of things. This happened in

the Spanish war, and would have happened in the Catholic question if the Quarterly had not been under Canning's influence. Thirdly, I am neither enthusiast nor hypocrite, but a man deeply and habitually religious in all my feelings.

"No, Grosvenor, I shall never get more from Government than has already been given me, and I am and ought to be well contented with it; only they ought to allow me my wine in kind, and dispense with the Odes. When did this fool's custom begin? Before Cibber's time? I would have made the office honourable if they would have let me. If they will not, the dishonour will not be mine. And now I am going to think about my rhymes, so farewell for the night.

"Friday, Dec. 30.

"I have been rhyming as doggedly and as dully as if my name had been Henry James Pye. Another dogged fit will, it is to be hoped, carry me through the job; and as the Ode will be very much according to rule, and entirely good-for-nothing, I presume it may be found unobjectionable. Meantime the poor Mus. Doc. has the old poem to mumble over. As I have written in regular stanzas, I shall despatch him one by this post to set him his tune. It is really my wish to use all imaginable civility to the Mus. Doc., and yet I dare say he thinks me a troublesome fellow as well as an odd one.

"God bless you!

R. SOUTHEY."

To Walter Savage Landor, Esq.

"Keswick, Feb. 3. 1815.

"In one of the first books which I published a crazy compositor took it into his head to correct the proofs after me; and this he did so assiduously, that it cost me no fewer than sixteen cancels to get rid of the most intolerable of his blunders. One of his principles was, that in printing verse, wherever the lines were so indented that two in succession did not begin in the same perpendicular, there was to be a full stop at the end of the former; and upon this principle he punctuated my verses. I discovered it at last in the printing-office, upon inquiring how it happened that the very faults for which a leaf was cancelled appeared most perseveringly in the reprint. The man then came forward, quite in a fit of madness, told me I should have made a pretty book of it if he had not corrected it for me, and it was as much as the master of the office could do to pacify him.

"You have, I think, at Tours, the grave of Ronsard, who would have been a great poet if he had not been a Frenchman. I have read his works in those odds and ends of time which can be afforded to such reading, and have so much respect for him, Frenchman as he was, that I shall not visit Tours without inquiring for his grave. Never did man more boldly promise immortality to himself, — never did man more ardently aspire after it; and no Frenchman has ever impressed me with an equal sense of power; but poetry of the higher order is as impossible in that

language as it is in Chinese. And this reminds me of a certain M. le Mierre, interprète, traducteur, &c., who has written to tell me that many of my *compatriotes, distingués par leur goût et leurs connoissances,* have spoken to him with great eulogies of my poem of Roderick; whereupon he, not having seen the poem, has resolved to translate it, and found a bookseller who will undertake to print the translation. I wrote him, as courtesy required, a civil reply, but expressed my doubts whether such a poem would accord with the tastes of a French public, and recommended him, if he should persist in his intention when he had read the work, to render it in prose rather than in verse.

"I have begun my Quaker poem, and written the first book in irregular rhyme, — a measure which allows of a lower key than any structure of rhymeless verse, and may be laid aside, when the passion requires it, for dialogue. The principal character is rather a Seeker (in the language of that day) than a Quaker, a son of Goffe, the King's Judge, a godson of Cromwell, a friend of Milton, a companion of William Penn. The plan is sufficiently made out; but I have no longer that ardour of execution which I possessed twenty years ago. I have the disheartening conviction that my best is done, and that to add to the bulk of my works will not be to add to their estimation. Doubtless I shall go on with the poem, and complete it if I live; but it will be to please others, not myself; and will be so long in progress, that in all likelihood I shall never begin another. You see I am not without those autumnal feelings

which your stanza expresses, and yet the decline of life has delights of its own — its autumnal odours and its sunset hues. My disposition is invincibly cheerful, and this alone would make me a happy man, if I were not so from the tenour of my life; yet I doubt whether the strictest Carthusian has the thought of death more habitually in his mind.

"I hope to see you in the autumn, and will, if it be possible. God bless you!

R. S."

To Mr. J. Neville White.

"Keswick, Feb. 16. 1815.

"My dear Neville,

"Since you heard from me, I have scarcely seen a face but those of my own family, nor been farther from home than Friars' Crag, except one fine day, which tempted me to Lord William Gordon's. The weeks and months pass by as rapidly as an ebb tide. The older we grow the more we feel this. The hour-glass runs always at the same rate; but when the sands are more than half spent, it is then only that we perceive how rapidly they are running out. I have been close at the desk this winter. The Quarterly takes up a heavy portion of my time. You would see in the last number two articles of mine — one upon the History of English Poetry, the other upon Forbes's Travels, both deplorably injured by mutilation. The next number will have a pretty full abstract of Lewis and Clarke's Travels. All these things cost me more time than they would any

other person, for upon every subject, I endeavour to read all such books relating to it, as I had before left unread.

"I know not that there is anything farther to tell you of myself, unless it be, that I have written the first book of Oliver Newman, and that it is in irregular rhymes. We are all, thank God, tolerably well. Herbert goes on stoutly with his Greek, and last week he began to learn German, which I shall acquire myself in the process of teaching him.

"How is James going on? This I am anxious to hear. The Income Tax was laid on with great injustice; it is taken off, not because it pressed with a cruel weight upon those of small fortune, but because it took in a proper proportion from the great landholders and capitalists, who cannot be got at in an equal degree by any other manner. For instance, Lord —— pays probably 10,000*l.* a year to this tax. Nothing that can be substantiated for it can by possibility take from him a tenth part of that sum. The tax ought not to be continued; but I would have given it one year longer, that Government might have been enabled, with as much facility as possible, to wind up the accounts of a long war, unexampled alike in its duration, importance, and expense. Not to have done this will lower the English people in the eyes of other nations; but of all people under Heaven who have any country to boast of, we are the least patriotic.

Believe me, my dear Neville,
Very affectionately yours,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Dr. Southey.

"Feb. 16. 1815.

"My dear Harry,

"I have got scent of the squid-hound, for whom I inquired in the Omniana. Cartwright heard of a sort of cuttle-fish of this enormous size; there is a beast of this family on the coast of Brazil, which twines its suckers round a swimmer and destroys him; and Langsdorff, who relates this, refers with disbelief to a book, which I wish you would examine for me. In the Histoire Naturelle des Mollusques, par Denys Montfort, Paris, An. 10., under the head of Le Poulpe Colossal, there must be an account of a fellow big enough to claw down a large three-masted vessel. Being a modern work of natural history, I dare say the book will be at the Royal Institution, and I pray you to extract the account for me. I shall make use of it in an article about Labrador for the Quarterly. Cartwright says, he is told they grow to a most enormous size, as big as a large whale, and he evidently does not disbelieve it. He was not a credulous man, and knew upon what sort of authority he was speaking. The description of the Kraken accords perfectly with this genus. You know, Doctor, that I can swallow a Kraken. You know, also, that I am a mortal enemy to that sort of incredulity which is founded upon mere ignorance.

"Several weeks have elapsed since this letter was begun; and in the interim, to my no small satisfaction, I have found one of these monsters dead, and

literally floating many a rood. The Frenchman, De Menonville, met with it between the Gulf of Mexico and St. Domingo (see Pinkerton's Coll. vol. xiii. p. 873.), and knew not what to make of it.

"I have heard from many quarters of Lord Byron's praise, and regard it just as much as I did his censure. Nothing can be more absurd than thinking of comparing any of my poems with the Paradise Lost. With Tasso, with Virgil, with Homer, there may be fair grounds of comparison; but my mind is wholly unlike Milton's, and my poetry has nothing of his imagination and distinguishing character; nor is there any poet who has, except Wordsworth: he possesses it in an equal degree. And it is entirely impossible that any man can understand Milton, and fail to perceive that Wordsworth is a poet of the same class and of equal powers. Whatever my powers may be, they are not of that class. From what I have seen of the minor poems, I suspect that Chiabrera is the writer whom, as a poet, I most resemble in the constitution of my mind. His narrative poems I have never seen.

"The sale of Roderick is what I expected, neither better nor worse. It is also just what I should desire, if profit were a matter of indifference to me; for I am perfectly certain that great immediate popularity can only be obtained by those faults which fall in with the humour of the times, and which are, of course, ultimately fatal to the poems that contain them. God bless you!

R. S."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq.

"Keswick, March 9. 1815.

"My dear Wynn,

"It would be needless to say that I am much gratified by your general opinion of Roderick. To most of your objections I can reply satisfactorily to my own judgment. The eleven syllable lines (by which we must here understand those which have the redundant syllable anywhere *except at the end,*) I justify upon principle and precedent, referring to the practice of Shakspeare and Milton, as authorities from which there can be no appeal. The blending two short syllables into the time of one is as well known in versification as what are called binding-notes are in music.

"The descriptive passages are the relief of the poem, the time in which the action took place not affording me any costume available for this purpose; and relief was especially required in a work wherein the passion was pitched so high.

"I cannot abbreviate the first scene between Julian and Roderick without destroying the connection; and for the blinding of Theodofred, where else could it have been introduced with so much effect as in its present place, where it is so related as at once to mark the character of Rusilla?

"The words to which you object are, one and all, legitimate English words; and I believe, in those places where they are used, the same meaning could not be expressed without a periphrasis. The account

of the Spanish towns, &c. was for the double purpose of relief, and of distinctly marking the geography. The auriphrygiate is the only piece of pedantry that I acknowledge, and I was tempted to it by the grandiloquence of the word. You need not be told how desirable it often is to connect blank verse with sonorous words.

"The image of the clouds and the moon*, I saw from my chamber window at Cintra when going to bed, and noted it down with its application the next morning. I have it at this moment distinctly before my eyes, with all the accompanying earth-scenery. Thus much for Roderick. Shall I ever accomplish another work of equal magnitude? I am an older man in feelings than in years, and the natural bent of my inclinations would be never again to attempt one.

"The last Register was not mine, nor do I know by whom it was written. I have not seen it. For the former volume I have never been wholly paid, and have lost from 300*l.* to 400*l.* altogether — to me a very serious loss.† At present my time is divided

* Methinks if ye would know
How visitations of calamity
Affect the pious soul, 'tis shown ye there!
Look yonder at that cloud, which through the sky
Sailing alone doth cross in her career
The rolling moon! I watched it as it came,
And deemed the bright opake would blot her beams;
But, melting like a wreath of snow, it hangs
In folds of wavy silver round, and clothes
The orb with richer beauties than her own,
Then passing, leaves her in her light serene.
Roderick, sect. xxi.

† Part of this was ultimately paid, but not for several years.

at fits between the History of the Spanish War, and that of Brazil: the latter is in the press, and will be published about the close of the year. I shall follow it immediately with the History of Portugal, which will be by far the most interesting of my historical works.

"Your godson bids fair to walk in the ways of his father. He is now in his ninth year, and knows about as much Greek as a boy in the under-fifth. His Latin consists in a decent knowledge of the grammar, and a tolerable *copia verborum*. His sister teaches him French, and he and I have lately begun to learn German together. Do not fear that we are over-doing him, for he has plenty of play, and, indeed, plays at his lessons. He takes it for granted that he must be a poet in his turn; and in this respect, as far as it is possible to judge, nature seems to agree with him. Be that as it may, there is not a happier creature upon this earth, nor could any father desire a child of fairer promise, as to moral and intellectual qualities.

"When shall I see you? Alas, how little have we seen of each other for many many years! I might also say, since we used to sit till midnight over your claret at Ch. Ch. The first term of my lease expires in two years, and some reasons would induce me to come near London, if I could encounter the expense; but though my History of the War might possibly enable me to make the arduous removal, the increased costs of housekeeping would probably be more than I could meet. I know not whether I shall be in London this year; if I go, it will be shortly;

but I can ill afford the time, and for weighty reasons ought not to afford it. On the other hand, my uncle is advancing in years and declining in health; and if my visits are to be at such long intervals as they have hitherto been, there can be very few more, even upon the most favourable chances of life.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq.

"Keswick, May 20. 1815.

"My dear Wynn,

"It is surprising to me that men whose fortunes are not absolutely desperate at home will go to India to seek them; that is, men who have any feelings beyond what is connected with the sense of touch. Fourteen years' transportation is a heavy sentence; Strachey, I think, has been gone seventeen. What a portion of human life is this, and of its best years! After such an absence the pain of returning is hardly less severe, and perhaps more lasting, than that of departure. He finds his family thinned by death; his parents, if he finds them at all, fallen into old age, and on the brink of the grave; the friends whom he left in youth so changed as to be no longer the same. What fortune can make amends for this! It is indeed *propter vitam vivendi perdere causas!* I grieve to think sometimes that you and I, who were once in such daily habits of intimate intercourse, meet now only at intervals of two or three years;

though, besides our communication by letter (too seldom, I *confess,* rather than *complain*), what we do in public serve to keep us in sight of each other. However indifferent may be the matter of the debate, I always look to see if Mr. C. Wynn has spoken. But Strachey must almost feel himself in another world.

"I thought that rascal Murat might have done more mischief. The proper termination of his career would be that the Sicilian Bourbons should catch him, and send him to Madrid; and I think Louis the Eighteenth would now be fully justified in sending Prince Joseph to the same place. The contest in France cannot surely be long; if Bonaparte could have acted with vigour on the offensive, he would have found perilous allies in Saxony, and little resistance from the Belgians. But the internal state of France paralyses him; and if he acts on the defensive, he can derive no advantage from the injustice of the great German powers. Two things were wanting last year,—the British army did not get to Paris, and the French were neither punished as they deserved, nor humbled as the interests of the rest of the world required. It will, I trust, now be put beyond all doubt that they have been conquered, and that their metropolis has been taken.

"The second edition of Roderick is selling well. It will probably soon reach to a third, and then fall into the slow steady sale of its predecessors. The sale will become of importance, when by the laws of literary property it will no longer benefit the author in his family. This is an abominable injustice, and

will, I suppose, one day be redressed, but not in our times. I am misemploying much time in reviewing for the lucre of gain, which nothing but filthy lucre should make me do. My History of Brazil, however, gets on in the press; and you would be surprised were you to see the materials which I have collected for it. I did not think it right to postpone this second volume till my History of the Spanish War was done; for it had already been postponed too long. But it is a considerable sacrifice which I thus have been making. As soon as this work is off my hands I shall be able to put the History of Portugal to press without impeding the more profitable work. It is on this that I should wish to rest my reputation. As a poet I know where I have fallen short; and did I consult only my own feelings, it is probable that I should write poetry no more,—not as being contented with what I have done, but as knowing that I can hope to do nothing better. I might were my whole heart and mind given to it, as they were in youth; but they are no longer at my own disposal. As an historian I shall come nearer my mark. For thorough research, indeed, and range of materials, I do not believe that the History of Potugal will ever have been surpassed.

"God bless you, my dear Wynn!

Yours very affectionately,

R. S."

To the Rev. Nicholas Lightfoot.

"Keswick, June 18. 1815.

"My dear Lightfoot,

"You cannot think of me more frequently nor more affectionately than I do of you. These recollections begin to have an autumnal shade of feeling; and habitually joyous as my spirits are, I believe that if we were now to meet, my first impulse would be to burst into tears. I was not twenty when we parted, and one and twenty years have elapsed since that time. Of the men with whom I lived at Oxford, Wynn, Elmsley, and yourself are all that are left. Seward is dead, Charles Collins is dead, Robert Allen is dead, Burnett is dead. I have lost sight of all the rest.

"My family continue in number the same as when you heard from me last. I am my son's schoolmaster, and, in the process, am recovering my Greek, which I had begun to forget at Balliol. How long I may continue to abide here is uncertain: the first term of my lease will expire in 1817; if I do not remove then, I must remain for another seven years, and I am far too sensible of the insecurity of life to look beyond that time. Having many inducements to remove nearer London, and many to remain where I am, the trouble and enormous expense of moving (for I have not less than 5000 books) will probably turn the scale; certainly they will weigh heavy in it. It is not that I have any business in London as Poet-Laureate; that office imposes upon me no such necessity; it only requires, as a matter of decorum,

that when I happen to be there I should sometimes attend a levee, especially on the birth-day, but it is not expected that I should make a journey for this purpose, and accordingly I have never been at court since I kissed hands upon my appointment. . . .

"I have just been reading the Ludus Literarius of my friend Dr. Bell: happy is the schoolmaster who profits by it, and reforms his school upon the Madras system. I pray you give the subject a serious consideration. The only real obstacle is the want of initiatory books, but they would be very easily made; and I believe that very few pieces of literary labour would be so largely repaid. It is *quite certain* that his system removes 99 parts in 100 of the miseries of the school-boys and the school-master.

. . . . . .

"Thus, Lightfoot, my life passes as uniformly and as laboriously as yours. There is one difference in your favour: you, perhaps, look on to an end of your labours, which I never must do till 'my right hand forget its cunning.' But I am very happy, and I dare say so are you. 'The cheerful man's a king,' says the old song; and if this be true, both you and I are royal by nature.

"God bless you, my dear Lightfoot!

Believe me, most truly and affectionately,

Your old friend,

R. SOUTHEY."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq., M.P.

"Keswick, June 18. 1815.

"My dear Wynn,

"You have done many things which have given me great pleasure since your last letter. I never was more rejoiced than when Lord Grenville gave his full and manly support to a war which, beyond all others in which we have been involved, is necessary and inevitable. I am very glad, also, to see that you are doing something to promote vaccination. Much may be done towards the cure and prevention of diseases, by wise legislative interference; and this is one of the points in which the state of society is susceptible of great improvement. . . . . .

"The question of incest was touched upon, and you very properly recommended that the case of —— should rest upon the existing law, rather than make it the subject of a specific (and superfluous) clause in the act of divorce. But has it never occurred to you, my dear Wynn, that this law is an abominable relic of ecclesiastical tyranny? Of all second marriages, I have no hesitation in saying that these are the most natural, the most suitable, and likely to be the most frequent, if the law did not sometimes prevent them. It is quite monstrous to hear judges and lawyers speaking, as they have done of late, upon this subject, and confounding natural incest with what was only deemed to be incestuous, in order that the Church might profit by selling dispensations for its commission — a species of marriage, too, which was not only permitted by the Levitical law, but even

enjoined by it. I should be glad to know in what part of the Christian dispensation it is prohibited as a crime. The probable reason why the law was not swept away in this country at the Reformation, was, because it involved the *cause* of that event; but surely we owe no such respect to the memory of Henry the Eighth, that it should still continue to disgrace a reformed country.

"Longman was to send you my poems. You will perceive how very few have been written since I was twenty-five, and that may account for the numberless and incorrigible faults, and the good-for-nothingness of a great part of them, which, had they been my own property, would have gone behind the fire.

"They have made me member of another academy at Madrid — the R. A. *of History* — a body which have rendered most efficient service to the literature of that country. This gives me some privileges*, which I should be very glad to profit by, if I could afford a journey to Spain, for I should have better access to archives and manuscripts than any foreigner has ever enjoyed.

"You will see in the next Quarterly a picture, which I found in M. Larrey's book — Bonaparte sleeping in the Desert by a fire of human bodies and bones — the remains of travellers who had perished there, and been dried by the sun and sands! It is

* The same privileges as if he had been a member of the royal household. "I do not know," he says in another letter, "how this will accord with the English privilege which I must use of speaking my free opinion of Ferdinand's conduct."

one of the most extraordinary and appropriate situations that ever fancy conceived. . . . . .

"God bless you, my dear Wynn.

Yours most affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

The important question of marriage with a wife's sister, touched upon in the foregoing letter, is far too summarily disposed of; for, first of all, the ecclesiastical prohibition is traced back to the primitive ages of Christianity, so that it cannot be accounted for by the supposition that it originated in the wish to multiply dispensations. (See the printed evidence of Dr. Pusey and of the Hon. and Rev. A. P. Perceval.)

Secondly, the Levitical law nowhere authorises, much less enjoins, this particular union. The prohibited degrees are, in Leviticus, in most cases, stated only on one side; and the Church has supplied the other: as, if a man must not marry his father's wife, a woman must not marry her mother's husband. By this mode of interpretation, if a man must not marry his brother's wife (*Lev.* xviii. 16., and xx. 21.), a woman must not marry her sister's husband. The former of these connections is twice forbidden, the latter is not mentioned, but is inferred. My father's notion is, I suppose, based upon the other passage (*Deut.* xxv. 5.), where a brother is enjoined to take to him his brother's wife. This, however, is only an exceptional case, ordered for a special purpose, and cannot be set against the general law stated in Leviticus, nor authorise the like exception in the case of the woman, the case not applying. It is not my wish to

say anything more upon this subject than seems called for by the opinion given in this letter. If I had not printed it, I might, perhaps, have been supposed by some who are acquainted with what my father's sentiments were, to have suppressed a statement upon a topic of more than common interest at the present time.

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, June 24. 1815.

"My dear Grosvenor,

" . . . .

Our bells are ringing as they ought to do; and I, after a burst of exhilaration at the day's news*, am in a state of serious and thoughtful thankfulness for what, perhaps, ought to be considered as the greatest deliverance that civilised society has experienced since the defeat of the Moors by Charles Martel. I never feared or doubted the result; but if we had been thus thoroughly defeated in the first battle, the consequences would have been too fatal to think of with composure. Perhaps enough has been done to excite a revolt in Paris; but I have a strong impression, either upon my imagination or my judgment, that that city will suffer some part of its deserved chastisement. The cannon should be sent home and formed into a pillar to support a statue of Wellington in the centre of the largest square in London.

* Of the battle of Waterloo.

"I am expecting the Review daily. Your hint respecting Marlborough does not accord with my own opinion of the subject. I could make nothing of a life of Marlborough. A battle can only be made tolerable in narration when it has something picturesque in its accidents, scene, &c. &c., which is not the case with any of Marlborough's. The only part which I could make valuable would be what related to Louis XIV. and the peace of Utrecht. But if the Bibliopole of Albemarle Street were to propound sweet remuneration for the Egyptian story, he would do wisely. With all his sagacity, he turned a deaf ear to the most promising project which ever occurred to me — that of writing the age of George III. This I will do whenever (if ever) I get free from the necessity of raising immediate supplies by temporary productions. The subject, as you may perceive, is nothing less than a view of the world during the most eventful half century of its annals,— not the *history*, but a philosophical summary, with reference to the causes and consequences of all these mighty revolutions. There never was a more splendid subject, and I have full confidence in my own capacity for treating it.

"Did I tell you of the Yankee's pamphlet, to abuse me for an article in the Quarterly which I did not write, and (between ourselves) would not have written? He talks of my getting drunk with my sack. One especial (and just) cause of anger is the expression that 'Washington, we believe, was an honest man;' and I am reviled for this in America, when I was consternating the Lord Chamberlain by

speaking of Washington with respect in a New Year's Ode! Has Longman sent you the Minor Poems? The newspapers ought to reprint that ode upon Bonaparte. . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"July 10. 1815.

"My dear R.,

"I could wish myself in London to be three-and-forty hours nearer the news. Was there ever such a *land* battle in modern times! The wreck has been as complete as at the Nile. Murray propounds me sweet remuneration to bring it into his next number, which, as I have a French history of Massena's campaign before me, it will be easy to do, the object of that book being to prove that the French beat us wherever they met us, and that Lord Wellington is no general, and, moreover, exceedingly afraid of them. The battle of Waterloo is a good answer to this. The name which Blucher has given it will do excellently in verse — the field of Fair Alliance! but I do not like it in prose, for we gave them such an English thrashing, that the name ought to be one which comes easily out of an English mouth. If you can help me to any information, I shall know how to use it.

"If Bonaparte comes here, which is very likely, I hope no magnanimity will prevent us from delivering him up to Louis XVIII.; unless, indeed, we could

collect evidence of the murder of Captain Wright, and bring him to trial and condemnation for that offence. This would be the best finish.

"I am sorry Lafayette has opened his mouth in this miserable Assembly. As for the rest of them — gallows, take thy course. . . . . They should all be hanged in their robes for the sake of the *spectacle*, and the benefit of *M. Jean Quetch.* What a scene of vile flattery shall we have when the Bourbons are restored!

Yours truly,

R. S."

To Dr. Southey.

"Keswick, Aug. 23. 1815.

"My dear Harry,

"According to all form, I ought to write you a letter of congratulation*; but some unlucky ingredient in my moral, physical, and intellectual composition has all my life long operated upon me with respect to forms, like that antipathy which some persons feel towards cats, or other objects equally inoffensive. I get through them so badly at all times, that, whenever I am obliged to the performance, my chief concern is, how to slink out of it as expeditiously as possible. I have, moreover, a propensity which may seem at first, not very well to accord with that constitutional hilarity which is my best inherit-

* On his marriage. On some similar occasion, my father remarks, "I never wish people joy of their marriage; that they will find for themselves: what I wish them is — patience."

ance. Occasions of joy and festivity seem rather to depress the barometer of my spirits than to raise it; birth-days and wedding-days, therefore, pass uncelebrated by me; and with the strongest conviction of the good effects of national holidays, and with a feeling towards them which men, who are incapable of understanding what is meant by the imaginative faculty, might call superstition, I yet wish, if it were possible, that Christmas and New Year's Day could be blotted from my calendar. It might not be difficult to explain why this is, but it would be somewhat metaphysical, which is bad, and somewhat sentimental, which is worse.

"Monday, the 21st of August, was not a more remarkable day in your life than it was in that of my neighbour Skiddaw, who is a much older personage. The weather served for our bonfire *, and never, I believe, was such an assemblage upon such a spot. To my utter astonishment, Lord Sunderlin rode up, and Lady S., who had endeavoured to dissuade *me* from going as a thing too dangerous, joined the walking party. Wordsworth, with his wife, sister, and eldest boy, came over on purpose. James Boswell arrived that morning at the Sunderlins. Edith, the Senhora †, Edith May, and Herbert were my convoy, with our three maid-servants, some of our neighbours, some adventurous Lakers, and Messrs. Rag, Tag, and Bobtail, made up the rest of the assembly. We roasted beef and boiled plum-pud-

* In honour of the Battle of Waterloo.

† Miss Barker, a lady with whom my father first became acquainted at Cintra.

dings there; sung 'God save the king' round the most furious body of flaming tar-barrels that I ever saw; drank a huge wooden bowl of punch; fired cannon at every health with three times three, and rolled large blazing balls of tow and turpentine down the steep side of the mountain. The effect was grand beyond imagination. We formed a huge circle round the most intense light, and behind us was an immeasurable arch of the most intense darkness, for our bonfire fairly put out the moon.

"The only mishap which occurred will make a famous anecdote in the life of a great poet, if James Boswell, after the example of his father, keepeth a diary of the sayings of remarkable men. When we were craving for the punch, a cry went forth that the kettle had been knocked over, with all the boiling water! Colonel Barker, as Boswell named the Senhora, from her having had the command on this occasion, immediately instituted a strict inquiry to discover the culprit, from a suspicion that it might have been done in mischief, water, as you know, being a commodity not easily replaced on the summit of Skiddaw. The persons about the fire declared it was one of the gentlemen — they did not know his name; but he had a red cloak on; they pointed him out in the circle. The red cloak (a maroon one of Edith's) identified him; Wordsworth had got hold of it, and was equipped like a Spanish Don — by no means the worst figure in the company. He had committed this fatal *faux pas*, and thought to slink off undiscovered. But as soon as, in my inquiries concerning the punch, I learnt his guilt from the

Senhora, I went round to all our party, and communicated the discovery, and getting them about him, I punished him by singing a parody, which they all joined in: 'Twas *you* that kicked the kettle down! 'twas you, Sir, you!'

"The consequences were, that we took all the cold water upon the summit to supply our loss. Our myrmidons and Messrs. Rag and Co. had, therefore, none for their grog; they necessarily drank the rum pure; and you, who are physician to the Middlesex Hospital, are doubtless acquainted with the manner in which alcohol acts upon the nervous system. All our torches were lit at once by this mad company, and our way down the hill was marked by a track of fire, from flambeaux dropping the pitch, tarred ropes, &c. One fellow was so drunk that his companions placed him upon a horse, with his face to the tail, to bring him down, themselves being just sober enough to guide and hold him on. Down, however, we all got safely by midnight; and nobody, from the old Lord of seventy-seven to my son Herbert, is the worse for the toil of the day, though we were eight hours from the time we set out till we reached home.

. . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S.

"I heard of your election from your good and trusty ally, Neville White. If that man's means were equal to his spirit, he would be as rich as Crœsus."

CHAPTER XX.

FEELINGS OF REJOICING AT THE TERMINATION OF THE WAR WITH FRANCE. — JOURNEY TO WATERLOO. — ACCOUNT OF BEGUINAGES AT GHENT. — NOTICES OF FLANDERS. — OF THE FIELD OF BATTLE. — PURCHASE OF THE ACTA SANCTORUM. — DETENTION BY THE ILLNESS OF HIS DAUGHTER AT AIX-LA-CHAPELLE. — RETURN HOME. — PICTURE OF HIS DOMESTIC HAPPINESS IN THE PILGRIMAGE TO WATERLOO. — MULTITUDE OF CORRESPONDENTS. — MEETING WITH SPANISH LIBERALES IN LONDON. — RAPID FLIGHT OF TIME. — DECLINING FACILITY OF POETICAL COMPOSITION. — POLITICS. — REGRETS FOR THE DEATH OF YOUNG DUSAUTOY. — THE PILGRIMAGE TO WATERLOO. — SCOTT'S LORD OF THE ISLES. — THE HISTORY OF BRAZIL. — EVILS IN SOCIETY. — WANT OF ENGLISH BEGUINAGES.—EARLY ENGLISH POETRY. — DEATH OF HIS SON. — POETICAL CRITICISM. — FEELINGS OF RESIGNATION. — CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS EARLY LIFE. — GEOLOGY AND BOTANY BETTER STUDIES THAN CHEMICAL AND PHYSICAL SCIENCE.—THOMSON'S CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. — YOUTHFUL FEELINGS. — OWEN OF LANARK. — REMARKS ON HIS OWN FORTUNES AND CHARACTER. — COLLEGE LIFE. — WORDSWORTH'S POEMS.—1815—1816.

How deep an interest my father had taken in the protracted contest between France and England, the reader has seen; nor will he, I think, if well acquainted with the events of those times, and the state of feeling common among young men of the more educated classes at the close of the last century, be apt to censure him as grossly inconsistent, because he condemned the war at its outset, and augured well

at the commencement of Bonaparte's career, and yet could earnestly desire that war, in its later stages, "to be carried on with all the heart, and all the soul, and all the strength of this mighty empire," and could rejoice in the downfall

> "Of him, who, while Europe crouched under his rod,
> Put his trust in his fortune, and not in his God."

For the original commencement of the war in 1792–3 had been the combination of other European powers against revolutionary France, — a direct act of aggression supported by England, which would now be condemned by most men, and was then naturally denounced by all those who partook, in any degree, of Republican feeling.* But in the lapse of years the merits of the contest became quite altered; and from about the time when Bonaparte assumed the imperial crown, all his acts were marked by aggressiveness and overbearing usurpation. Not to speak of those personal crimes which turned my father's feelings towards the man into intense abhorrence, his political measures with respect to Switzerland, Holland, Egypt, and Malta were those of an unscrupulous and ambitious conqueror: and the invasion of Portugal, with his insolent treachery towards the Spanish royal family, made his iniquity intolerable. The real difference between my father

* He himself says of the Peace of Amiens: "No act of amnesty ever produced such conciliatory consequences as that peace. It restored in me the English feeling which had long been deadened, and placed me in sympathy with my country; bringing me thus into that natural and healthy state of mind, upon which time, and knowledge, and reflection were sure to produce their proper and salutary effects." — *From a MS. Preface to the Peninsular War.*

and the mass of writers and speakers in England at that time, was, that he never laid aside a firm belief that the Providence of God would put an end to Napoleon's wicked career, and that it was the office of Great Britain to be the principal instrument of that Providence.

But in addition to the national feelings of joy and triumph at the successful termination of this long and arduous warfare, my father had some grounds for rejoicing more peculiar to himself. When one large and influential portion of the community, supported by the Edinburgh Review, prognosticated constantly the hopelessness of the war, the certain triumph of Bonaparte, and especially the folly of hoping to drive him out of Spain, — when their language was, "France has conquered Europe; this is the melancholy truth; shut our eyes to it as we may, there can be no doubt about the matter; for the present, peace and submission must be the lot of the vanquished;" he had stood forth among the boldest and most prominent of those who urged vigorous measures, and prophesied final success. And well might he now rejoice — kindle upon Skiddaw the symbol of triumph; and when contrasting the language he had held with that of those persons, exclaim, "Was I wrong? or has the event corresponded to this confidence?"

Ἀμέραι ἐπίλοιποι
Μάρτυρες σοφώτατοι.

Bear witness Torres Vedras, Salamanca, and Vittoria! Bear witness Orthies and Thoulouse! Bear witness Waterloo!

With these feelings it was very natural that he should have been among the crowd of English who hastened over to view the scene of that "fell debate," on the issue of which had so lately hung the fate of Europe.

To quote his own words: —

> "And as I once had journeyed to survey
> Far off Ourique's consecrated field,
> Where Portugal, the faithful and the bold,
> Assumed the symbols of her sacred shield.
> More reason now that I should bend my way,
> The field of British glory to survey.
>
> "So forth I set upon this pilgrimage,
> And took the partner of my life with me,
> And one dear girl, just ripe enough of age
> Retentively to see what I should see;
> That thus, with mutual recollections fraught,
> We might bring home a store for after thought."

Of this journey, as was his custom, he kept a minute and elaborate journal; but it is of too great length, and not possessing sufficient novelty, to be inserted here. The following letters, however, may not be without interest: —

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Brussels, Oct. 2. 1815.

"My dear Rickman,

"I wish you had been with me at Ghent, where the Beguines have their principal establishment. The Beguinage is a remarkable place, at one end of the city, and entirely enclosed. You enter through a gateway, where there is a statue of S. Elizabeth of

Hungary, the patroness of the establishment. The space enclosed is, I should think, not less than the area of the whole town of Keswick or of Christ Church; and the Beguinage itself, unlike almshouse, college, village, or town: a collection of contiguous houses of different sizes, each with a small garden in front, and a high brick wall enclosing them all; over every door the name of some saint under whose protection the house is placed, but no opening through which anything can be seen. There are several streets thus built, with houses on both sides. There is a large church within the enclosure, a burying-ground, without any grave-stones; and a branch from one of the innumerable rivers with which Ghent is intersected, in which the washing of the community is performed from a large boat; and a large piece of ground, planted with trees, where the clothes are dried. One, who was the second person in the community, accosted us, showed us the interior, and gave us such explanation as we desired, for we had with us a lady who spoke French. It is curious that she knew nothing of the origin of her order, and could not even tell by whom it was founded; but I have purchased here the Life of S. Bega, from whom it derived its name, and in this book I expect to find the whole history.

"There are about 6000 Beguines in Brabant and Flanders, to which countries they are confined; 620 were residents in the Beguinage. They were rich before the Revolution. Their lands were then taken from them, and they were obliged to lay aside the dress of the order; but this was only done in part,

because they were supported by public opinion; and being of evident utility to all ranks, few were disposed to injure them. They receive the sick who come to them, and support and attend them as long as the illness requires. They are bound by no vow, and my informant assured me, with evident pride, that no instance of a Beguine leaving the establishment had ever been known. She herself had entered it after the death of her husband; and I suppose their numbers are generally, if not wholly, filled up by women who seek a retreat, or need an asylum from the world. The property which a Beguine brings with her reverts to her heir-at-law. At the Revolution, the church of the Beguinage was sold, as confiscated religious property. This sale was a mere trick, or, in English phrase, a job to accommodate some partisan of the ruling demagogues with ready money. Such a man bought it, and in the course of two or three weeks resold it to two sisters of the community for 300 Louis d'ors, and they made it over again to the order. There is a refectory, where they dine in common if they please, or, if they please, have dinner sent from thence to their own chambers. We went into three chambers,—small, furnished with little more than necessary comforts, but having all these, and remarkably clean. In one, a Beguine, who had been bed-ridden many years, was sitting up and knitting. We were taken into the chamber, because it amused her to see visitors. She was evidently pleased at seeing us, and remarkably cheerful. In another apartment, two sisters were spinning, one of eighty-five, the other of eighty-three years of age.

In all this there is less information than I should have given you, if my tongue had not been the most antigallican in the world, and the Flemish French not very intelligible to my interpreter. The dress is convenient, but abominably ugly. I shall endeavour to get a doll equipped in it. The place itself I wish you could see; and, indeed, you would find a visit to Bruges and Ghent abundantly overpaid by the sight of those cities (famous as they are in history), and of a country, every inch of which is well husbanded.

"Bruges is, without exception, the most striking place I ever visited, though it derives nothing from situation. It seems to have remained in the same state for above 200 years; nothing has been added, and hardly anything gone to decay. What ruin has occurred there, was the work of frantic revolutionists, who destroyed all the statues in the niches of the Stadtt House, and demolished an adjoining church, one of the finest in the town. The air of antiquity and perfect preservation is such, that it carries you back to the age of the Tudors or of Froissart; and the whole place is in keeping. The poorest inhabitants seem to be well lodged; and if the cultivation of the ground and the well-being of the people be the great objects of civilisation, I should almost conclude that no part of the world was so highly civilised as this. At Ghent there is more business, more inequality, a greater mixture of French manners, and the alloy of vice and misery in proportion. Brussels, in like manner, exceeds Ghent, and is, indeed, called a second Paris. The modern part of the city is per-

fectly Parisian; the older, and especially the great square, Flemish.

. . . . . .

"We have seen the whole field of battle, or rather all the fields, and vestiges enough of the contest, though it is almost wonderful to observe how soon nature recovers from all her injuries. The fields are cultivated again, and wild flowers are in blossom upon some of the graves.* The Scotchmen—'those men without breeches'—have the credit of the day at Waterloo.

"The result of what I have collected is an opinion that the present settlement of these countries is *not* likely to be durable. The people feel at present pretty much as a bird who is rescued from the claw of one eagle by the beak of another. The Rhine is regarded as a proper boundary for Prussia; and it is as little desired that she should *pass* that river as that France should reach it. There is a spirit of independence here, which has been outraged, but from which much good might arise if it were conciliated. This, I am inclined to think, would be best done by forming a wide confederacy, leaving to each of the confederates its own territory, laws, &c.; and this might be extended from the frontiers of France to the Hanseatic cities. One thing I am certain, that

* "The passing season had not yet effaced
The stamp of numerous hoofs impressed by force,
Of cavalry, whose path might still be traced.
Yet Nature everywhere resumed her course;
Low pansies to the sun their purple gave,
And the soft poppy blossomed on the grave."
Pilgrimage to Waterloo.

such arrangements would satisfy everybody, except those sovereigns who would lose by it. I am aware how short a time I have been in the country, and how liable men, under such circumstances, are to be deceived; but I have taken the utmost pains to acquire all the knowledge within my reach, and have been singularly fortunate in the means which have fallen in my way. The merest accident brought me acquainted with a Liegois, a great manufacturer, &c., and I have not found that men talk to me with the less confidence because I am not a freemason. . . . .

"We turn our face homeward to-morrow, by way of Maestricht and Louvaine to Brussels. The delay here will possibly oblige us to give up Antwerp. However, on the whole, I have every reason to be pleased with the journey. No month of my life was ever better employed. God bless you!

R. S."

To John May, Esq.

"Liege, Oct. 6. 1815, six P.M.

"My dear Friend,

"I have a happy habit of making the best of all things; and being just at this time as uncomfortable as the dust and bustle, and all the disagreeables of an inn in a large filthy manufacturing city can make me, I have called for pen, ink, and paper, and am actually writing in the bar, the door open to the yard opposite to this unwiped table, the doors open to the public room, where two men are dining and talking

French, and a woman servant at my elbow lighting a fire for our party. Presently the folding-doors are to be shut, the ladies are to descend from their chambers, the bar will be kept appropriated to our house, the male part of the company will get into good humour, dinner will be ready, and then I must lay aside the grey goose-quill. As a preliminary to these promised comforts, the servant is mopping the hearth, which is composed (like a tesselated pavement) of little bricks about two inches long by half an inch wide, set within a broad black stone frame. The fuel is of fire-balls, a mixture of pulverised coal and clay. I have seen a great deal, and heard a great deal, — more, indeed, than I can keep pace with in my journal, though I strive hard to do it; but I minute down short notes in my pencil-book with all possible care, and hope, in the end, to lose nothing. As for Harry and his party, I know nothing more of them than that they landed at Ostend a week before us, and proceeded the same day to Bruges. To-morrow we shall probably learn tidings of them at Spa. Meantime, we have joined company with some fellow-passengers, Mr. Vardon, of Greenwich, with his family, and Mr. Nash, an artist, who has lived many years in India. Flanders is a most interesting country. Bruges, the most striking city I have ever seen, an old city in perfect preservation. It seems as if not a house had been built during the last two centuries, and not a house suffered to pass to decay. The poorest people seem to be well lodged, and there is a general air of sufficiency, cleanliness, industry, and comfort, which I have never seen in any other

place. The cities have grown worse as we advanced. At Namur we reached a dirty city, situated in a romantic country; the Meuse there reminded me of the Thames from your delightful house, an island in size and shape resembling that upon which I have often wished for a grove of poplars, coming just in the same position. From thence along the river to this abominable place, the country is, for the greater part, as lovely as can be imagined, especially at Huy, where we slept last night, and fell in with one of the inhabitants, a man of more than ordinary intellect, from whom I learnt much of the state of public opinion, &c.

"Our weather hitherto has been delightful. This was especially fortunate at Waterloo and at Ligny, where we had much ground to walk over. It would surprise you to see how soon nature has recovered from the injuries of war. The ground is ploughed and sown, and grain and flowers and seeds already growing over the field of battle, which is still strewn with vestiges of the slaughter, caps, cartridges, boxes, hats, &c. We picked up some French cards and some bullets, and we purchased a French pistol and two of the eagles which the infantry wear upon their caps. What I felt upon this ground, it would be difficult to say; what I saw, and still more what I heard, there is no time at present for saying. In prose and in verse you shall some day hear the whole. At Les Quatre Bras, I saw two graves, which probably the dogs or the swine had opened. In the one were the ribs of a human body, projecting through the mould; in the other, the whole skeleton exposed.

Some of our party told me of a third, in which the worms were at work, but I shrunk from the sight. You will rejoice to hear that the English are as well spoken of for their deportment in peace as in war. It is far otherwise with the Prussians. Concerning them there is but one opinion; their brutality is said to exceed that of the French, and of their intolerable insolence I have heard but too many proofs. That abominable old Frederic made them a military nation, and this is the inevitable consequence. This very day we passed a party on their way towards France — some hundred or two. Two gentlemen and two ladies of the country, in a carriage, had come up with them; and these ruffians would not allow them to pass, but compelled them to wait and follow the slow pace of foot soldiers! This we ourselves saw. Next to the English, the Belgians have the best character for discipline.

"I have laid out some money in books — four or five-and-twenty pounds — and I have bargained for a set of the Acta Sanctorum to be completed and sent after me — the price 500 francs. This is an invaluable acquisition. Neither our time or money will allow us to reach the Rhine. We turn back from Aix-la-Chapelle, and take the route of Maestricht and Louvaine to Antwerp, thence to Ghent again, and cross from Calais. I bought at Bruges a French History of Brazil, just published by M. Alphouse de Beauchamp, in three volumes octavo. He says, in his Preface, that having finished the two first volumes, he thought it advisable to see if any new light had been thrown upon the subject by modern

authors. Meantime, a compilation upon this history had appeared in England, but the English author, Mr. Southey, had brought no new lights; he had promised much for his second volume, but the hope of literary Europe had been again deceived, for this second volume, so emphatically promised, had not appeared. I dare say no person regrets this delay so much as M. Beauchamp, he having stolen the whole of his two first volumes, and about the third part of the other, from the very Mr. Southey whom he abuses. He has copied my references as the list of his own authorities (manuscripts and all), and he has committed blunders which prove, beyond all doubt, that he does not understand Portuguese. I have been much diverted by this fellow's impudence.

"The table is laid, and the knives and forks rattling a pleasant note of preparation, as the woman waiter arranges them.

"God bless you! I have hurried through the sheet, and thus pleasantly beguiled what would have been a very unpleasant hour. We are all well, and your god-daughter has seen a live emperor at Brussels. I feel the disadvantage of speaking French ill, and understanding it by the ear worse. Nevertheless, I speak it without remorse, make myself somehow or other understood, and get at what I want to know. Once more, God bless you, my dear friend.

"Believe me always most affectionately yours,

R. S."

To John May, Esq.

"Brussels, Friday, Oct. 20. 1815.

"My dear Friend,

"I wrote to you from Liege, up to which time all had gone on well with us. Thank God, it is well with us at present; but your god-daughter has been so unwell, that we were detained six days at Aix-la-Chapelle in a state of anxiety which you may well imagine, and at an hotel, where the Devil himself seemed to possess the mistress and the greater part of the domestics. Happily, I found a physician who had graduated at Edinburgh, who spoke English, and pursued a rational system; and happily, also, by this painful and expensive delay I was thrown into such society, that now the evil is over, I am fully sensible of the good to which it has conduced. The day after my letter was written, we reached Spa, and remained there Sunday and Monday — a pleasant and necessary pause, though the pleasure was somewhat interrupted by the state of my own health, which was somewhat disordered there — perhaps the effect of the thin Rhenish wines and the grapes. Tuesday we would have slept at Verones (the great clothing town) if we could have found beds. An English party had pre-occupied them, and we proceeded to Herve, a little town half way between Liege and Aix-la-Chapelle, in the old principality of Limbourg. . . . . .

"When we arrived at Aix-la-Chapelle, your god-daughter was so ill that, after seeing her laid in bed

(about one o'clock in the afternoon), I thought it necessary to go to the bankers, and request them to recommend me to a physician. You may imagine how painful a time we passed. It was necessary for her to gargle every hour, even if we waked her for it; but she never slept an hour continuously for the three first nights. Thank God, however, she seems thoroughly recovered, and I can estimate the good with calmness. While I acted as nurse and cook (for we were obliged to do everything ourselves), our party dined at the *table d'hote*, and there, as the child grew better, I found myself in the company of some highly distinguished Prussian officers. One of these, a Major Dresky, is the very man who was with Blucher at Ligny, when he was ridden over by the French; the other, Major Petry, is said by his brother officers to have won the battle of Donowitz for Blucher. Two more extraordinary men I never met with. You would have been delighted to hear how they spoke of the English, and to see how they treated us, as representatives of our country. Among the toasts which were given, I put this into French: 'The Belle-alliance between Prussia and England—may it endure as long as the memory of the battle.' I cannot describe to you the huzzaing, and hob-nobbing, and hand-shaking with which it was received. But the chief benefit which I have received, was from meeting with a certain Henry de Forster, a major in the German Legion, a Pole by birth, whose father held one of the highest offices in Poland. Forster, one of the most interesting men I ever met with, has been marked for mis-

fortune from his birth. Since the age of thirteen he has supported himself, and now supports a poor brother of eighteen, a youth of high principles and genius, who has for two years suffered with an abscess of the spleen. Forster entered the Prussian service when a boy, was taken prisoner and cruelly used in France, and escaped, almost miraculously, on foot into Poland. In 1809 he joined the Duke of Brunswick, and was one of those men who proved true to him through all dangers, and embarked with him. The Duke was a true German in patriotism, but without conduct, without principle, without gratitude. Forster entered our German Legion, and was in all the hot work in the Peninsula, from the lines of Torres Vedras till the end of the war. The severe duty of an infantry officer proved too much for his constitution, and a fall of some eighty feet down a precipice in the Pyrenees, brought on a hæmorrhage of the liver, for which he obtained unlimited leave of absence, and came to Aix-la-Chapelle. I grieve to say that he had a relapse on the very day that we left him. I never saw a man whose feelings and opinions seemed to coincide more with my own. When we had become a little acquainted, he shook hands with me in a manner so unlike an ordinary greeting, that I immediately understood it to be (as really it was) a trial whether I was a freemason. This gave occasion to the following sonnet, which I put into his hands at parting: —

"The ties of secret brotherhood, made known
By secret signs, and pressure of link'd hand
Significant, I neither understand
Nor censure. There are countries where the throne

And altar, singly, or with force combined,
Against the welfare of poor humankind
Direct their power perverse: in such a land
Such leagues may have their purpose; in my own,
Being needless, they are needs but mockery.
But to the wise and good there doth belong,
Ordained by God himself, a surer tie;
A sacred and unerring sympathy:
Which bindeth them in bonds of union strong
As time, and lasting as eternity.

"He has promised me to employ this winter in writing his memoirs — a task he had once performed, but the paper was lost in a shipwreck. He has promised, also, to come with the MSS. (if he lives) to England next summer, when I hope and expect that the publication will be as beneficial to his immediate interests as it will be honourable to his memory.

"We left Aix on Tuesday for Maestricht, slept the next night at St. Tron, Thursday at Louvaine, and arrived here to-day. To-morrow I go again with Nash to Waterloo, for the purpose of procuring drawings of Hougoumont. On Sunday we go for Antwerp, rejoin the Vardons on Monday night at Ghent, and then make the best of our way to Calais and London. God bless you, my dear friend.

Yours most affectionately,

R. S."

To John May, Esq.

"Keswick, Wednesday, Dec. 6. 1815.

"My dear Friend,

"You will be glad to hear that we arrived safely this day, after a less uncomfortable journey than

might have been apprehended from the season of the year. We found all well, God be thanked, and Edith, who complained a little the first day, got better daily as we drew nearer home. She complains of a headache now; but that is the natural effect of overexcitement, on seeing her brother and sisters and her cousin, and displaying the treasures which we have brought for them. We reached Wordsworth's yesterday, about seven o'clock. Three hours more would have brought us home, but I preferred passing the night at his house, for had we proceeded, we should have found the children in bed; and a return home, under fortunate circumstances, has something the character of a triumph, and requires daylight. Never, I believe, was there seen a happier household than this when the chaise drew up to the door. I find so many letters to answer, that to-morrow will be fully employed in clearing them off.

"God bless you, my dear friend!

Yours most affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

I cannot resist here quoting from the Pilgrimage to Waterloo the account of the return home. Many readers will not have seen it before. Those who have will not be displeased to see it again, giving, as it does, so vivid, so true a picture of his domestic happiness.

"O joyful hour, when to our longing home
The long-expected wheels at length drew nigh!
When the first sound went forth, 'They come, they come!'
And hope's impatience quicken'd every eye!
Never had man whom Heaven would heap with bliss
More glad return, more happy hour than this.

"Aloft on yonder bench, with arms dispread,
My boy stood, shouting there his father's name,
Waving his hat around his happy head;
And there, a younger group, his sisters came:
Smiling they stood with looks of pleased surprise,
While tears of joy were seen in elder eyes.

"Soon all and each came crowding round to share
The cordial greeting, the beloved sight;
What welcomings of hand and lip were there!
And when those overflowings of delight
Subsided to a sense of quiet bliss,
Life hath no purer, deeper happiness.

"The young companion of our weary way
Found here the end desired of all her ills;
She who in sickness pining many a day
Hunger'd and thirsted for her native hills,
Forgetful now of sufferings past and pain,
Rejoiced to see her own dear home again.

"Recover'd now, the homesick mountaineer
Sate by the playmate of her infancy,
The twin-like comrade,—render'd doubly dear
For that long absence: full of life was she,
With voluble discourse and eager mien
Telling of all the wonders she had seen.

"Here silently between her parents stood
My dark-eyed Bertha, timid as a dove;
And gently oft from time to time she woo'd
Pressure of hand, or word, or look of love,
With impulse shy of bashful tenderness,
Soliciting again the wish'd caress.

"The younger twain in wonder lost were they,
My gentle Kate, and my sweet Isabel:
Long of our promised coming, day by day
It had been their delight to hear and tell;
And now when that long-promised hour was come,
Surprise and wakening memory held them dumb.

. . . . . .

"Soon they grew blithe as they were wont to be;
Her old endearments each began to seek:
And Isabel drew near to climb my knee,
And pat with fondling hand her father's cheek;
With voice and touch and look reviving thus
The feelings which had slept in long disuse.

"But there stood one whose heart could entertain
And comprehend the fulness of the joy;
The father, teacher, playmate, was again
Come to his only and his studious boy:
And he beheld again that mother's eye
Which with such ceaseless care had watch'd his infancy.

"Bring forth the treasures now,—a proud display,—
For rich as Eastern merchants we return!
Behold the black Beguine, the Sister grey,
The Friars whose heads with sober motion turn,
The Ark well-fill'd with all its numerous hives,
Noah and Shem and Ham and Japhet, and their wives.

"The tumbler, loose of limb; the wrestlers twain;
And many a toy beside of quaint device,
Which, when his fleecy troops no more can gain
Their pasture on the mountains hoar with ice,
The German shepherd carves with curious knife,
Earning with easy toil the food of frugal life.

"It was a group which Richter, had he view'd,
Might have deem'd worthy of his perfect skill;
The keen impatience of the younger brood,
Their eager eyes and fingers never still;
The hope, the wonder, and the restless joy
Of those glad girls, and that vociferous boy!

"The aged friend * serene with quiet smile,
Who in their pleasure finds her own delight;
The mother's heart-felt happiness the while;
The aunts, rejoicing in the joyful sight;
And he who in his gaiety of heart,
With glib and noisy tongue perform'd the showman's part.

"Scoff ye who will! but let me, gracious Heaven,
Preserve this boyish heart till life's last day!
For so that inward light by Nature given
Shall still direct, and cheer me on my way,
And brightening as the shades of life descend,
Shine forth with heavenly radiance at the end."

Pilgrimage to Waterloo; PROEM.

* Mrs. Wilson, who is referred to occasionally in these volumes.

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq.

"Keswick, Dec. 15. 1815.

"My dear Wynn,

". . . . . .

The infrequency of my letters, my dear Wynn, God knows, is owing to no distaste. The pressing employments of one who keeps pace with an increasing expenditure by temporary writings, — the quantity which, from necessity as well as inclination, I have to read, and the multiplicity of letters which I have to write, are the sufficient causes. You do not know the number of letters which come to me from perfect strangers, who seem to think a poet-laureate has as much patronage as the Lord Chancellor. Not unfrequently the writers remind me so strongly of my own younger days, that I have given them the best advice I could, with earnestness as well as sincerity; and more than once been thus led into an occasional correspondence. The Laureateship itself with me is no sinecure. I am at work in consequence of it at this time. Do not suppose that I mean to rival Walter Scott. My poem will be in a very different strain. . . . . .

"During my stay in London, I scarcely ever went out of the circle of my private friends. I dined in company with Mina and some other Liberals — a set of men who (while I cannot but respect them as individuals, and feel that under the late Administration I myself might probably have felt and acted with them,) do certainly justify Ferdinand, not in his ca-

pricious freaks of favour and disfavour, but in the general and decided character of his measures. They are thorough Atheists, and would go the full length of their principles, being, I believe, all of them (as is, indeed, the character of the nation,) of the same iron mould as Cortes and Pizarro. Mina is a finer character,— young and ardent, and speaking of his comrades with an affection which conciliates affection for himself.

. . . . . .

"There is but one point in your letter in which I do not agree with you, and that regards the army. The necessity of maintaining it appears to me manifest, and the contingent danger imaginary. Our danger is not from that quarter. If we are to suffer from the army, it will be by their taking part against the Government (as in France), and siding in a mob revolution. In my judgment, we are tending this way insensibly to our rulers and to the main part of the people, but I fear inevitably. The foundations of Government are undermined. The props may last during your lifetime and mine, but I cannot conceal from myself a conviction that, at no very distant day, the whole fabric must fall! God grant that this ominous apprehension may prove false.

"God bless you, my dear Wynn.

Yours affectionately,

R. S."

To Mr. Neville White.

"Keswick, Jan. 8. 1816.

"My dear Neville,

"Did you ever watch the sands of an hour-glass? When I was first at Oxford, one of these old-fashioned measurers of time was part of my furniture. I rose at four o'clock, and portioned out my studies by the hour. When the sands ran low, my attention was often attracted by observing how much faster they appeared to run. Applying this image to human life, which it has so often been brought to illustrate, (whether my sands run low or not, is known only to Him by whom this frail vessel was made, but assuredly they run fast), it seems as if the weeks of my youth were longer than the months of middle age, and that I could get through more in a day then, than in a week now. Since I wrote to you, I have scarcely done anything but versify; and certain it is that twenty years ago, I could have produced the same quantity of verses in a fourth part of the time. It is true they would have been more faulty; but the very solicitude to avoid faults, and the slow and dreaming state which it induces, may be considered as indications that the season for poetry is gone by,—that I am falling into the yellow leaf, or, to use a more consoling metaphor, and perhaps a more applicable one, that poetry is but the blossom of an intellect so constituted as mine, and that with me the fruit is set,—in sober phrase, that it would be wisely done, if henceforth I confined myself to sober prose.

And this I could be well content to do, from a conviction in my own mind that I shall ultimately hold a higher place among historians (if I live to complete what is begun) than among poets. . . . .

"The affair of Lavalette, in France, pleases me well, except as far as regards the treatment of his wife for having done her duty. The king ought not to have pardoned him, and the law ought to have condemned him: both did as they ought, and, as far as depended upon them, his civil life was at an end. I should have had no pity for him if the axe had fallen; but a condemned criminal making his escape becomes a mere human creature striving for life, and the Devil take him, say I, who would not lend a hand to assist him, except in cases of such atrocious guilt as make us abhor and execrate the perpetrator, and render it unfit that he should exist upon earth.

"Of home politics, I grieve to say that the more I think of them, the worse they appear. All imaginable causes which produce revolution are at work among us; the solitary principle of education is the only counteracting power; and God knows this is very partial, very limited, and must be slow in its effects, even if it were upon a wider scale and a more permanent foundation. If another country were in this state, I should say, without hesitation, that revolution was at hand there, and that it was inevitable. If I hesitate at predicting to myself the same result here, it is from love or from weakness, from hope that we may mercifully be spared so dreadful a chastisement for our follies and our sins, and from fear of

contemplating the evils under which we should be overwhelmed. God bless you!

Yours most affectionately,

R. SOUTHEY."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Feb. 4. 1816.

"My dear G.,

"I have an official from the Treasury this evening, telling me, as you anticipated, that the prayer of my petition* is inadmissible. To be sure, it is much better they should repeal the duty than grant an exemption from it *speciali gratiâ;* but if they will do neither the one nor the other, it is too bad.

"Is it true that the Princess Charlotte is likely to be married? You will guess why I wish to know; though, if I had not written half a marriage poem, I certainly would not begin one, for, between ourselves, I have not been well used about the Laureateship. They require task verses from me,—not to keep up the custom of having them befiddled, but to keep up the task,—instead of putting an end to this foolery in a fair and open manner, which would do the court credit, and save me a silly expense of time and trouble. I shall complete what I have begun, because it is begun, and to please myself, not to obtain favour with anybody else; but when these things are done, if they continue to look for New Years' Odes from the Laureate, they shall have nothing else.

* A petition that some foreign books might come in duty free.

"Tom has been here for the last fortnight, looking about for a house. I cannot write verses in the presence of any person, except my wife and children. Tom, therefore, without knowing it, has impeded my Pilgrimage; but I can prosify, let who will be present, and Brazil is profiting by this interruption.

"Were you not here when poor Lloyd introduced M. Simond? and have you seen the said M. Simond's Travels in England, by a native of France? You will like the liveliness and the pervading good sense; and you will smile at the complacency with which he abuses Handel, Raphael, and Milton. He honours me with a couple of pages — an amusing mixture of journalising, personal civility, and critical presumption. My poems and Milton's, he says, have few readers, although they have many admirers. He applies to me the famous speech of the Cardinal to Ariosto, Dove Diavolo, &c., and thinks I write nonsense. However, it is better than Milton's, both Milton's love and theology being coarse and material, whereas I have tenderness and spirituality!!! He sets down two or three things which I told him, states my opinions as he is pleased to suppose, and concludes that the reason why I disapprove of Mr. Malthus's writings is, that I do not understand them. Bravo, M. Simond! Yet, in the main, it is a fair and able book, and I wonder how so sensible a man can write with such consummate self-assurance upon things above his reach.

"I long to have my Brazilian History finished, that that of the war may go to press in its stead; and could I abstain from reviewing, three months

would accomplish this desirable object; but 'I must live,' as the French libeller said to Richelieu, and, unlike the Cardinal, I know you will see the necessity for my so doing. However, I am in a fair train, and verily believe that after the present year I and the constable shall travel side by side in good fellowship. You will be glad to hear that I have got the correspondence of the Portuguese committee, with the official details of the conduct of Massena's army, and the consequent state of the people and the country. If I live to complete this work, I verily believe it will tend to mitigate the evils of war hereafter, by teaching men in command what ineffaceable infamy will pursue them if they act as barbarians.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Chauncey Hare Townshend, Esq.

"Keswick, Feb. 10. 1816.

"A natural but melancholy association reminds me of you. Between three and four years ago, a youth, as ardent in the study of poetry as yourself, but under less favourable circumstances of fortune, sent me some specimens of his poems, and consulted me concerning the course of life which he should pursue. He was the eldest of a very large family, and the father a half-pay officer. He wished to go to London, and study the law, and support himself while studying it by his pen. I pointed out to him the certain misery and ruin in which such an event

would involve him, and recommended him to go to Cambridge, where, with his talents and acquirements, he could not fail of making his way, unless he was imprudent. I interested myself for him at Cambridge; he was placed at Emmanuel, won the goodwill of his college, and was in the sure road both to independence and fame, when the fever of last year cut him off. I do not think there ever lived a youth of higher promise. His name was James Dusautoy. This evening I have been looking over his papers, with a view of arranging a selection of them for the press. In seeking to serve him, I have been the means of sending him prematurely to the grave. I will at least endeavour to preserve his memory.*

"Of the many poets, young and old, whom I have known only by letter, Kirke White, Dusautoy, and yourself have borne the fairest blossom. *In* the blossom *they* have been cut off. May *you* live to bring forth fruit!

"I think you intimated an intention of going to Cambridge. The fever has broken out there again; physicians know not how to treat it; it has more the character of a pestilence than any disease which has for many years appeared in this island; and unless you have the strongest reasons for preferring Cambridge, the danger and the *probability* of the recurrence of this contagion are such, that you would do well to turn your thoughts towards Oxford on this account alone.

"Your sonnets have gratified me and my family.

* See p. 24. antè.

Study our early poets, and avoid all imitation of your contemporaries. You cannot read the best writers of Elizabeth's age too often. Do you love Spenser? I have him in my heart of hearts.

"God bless you, Sir!

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"Keswick, March 17. 1816.

"My dear Scott,

"I have a debt upon my conscience, which has been too long unpaid. You left me a letter of introduction to the Duchess of Richmond, which I was graceless enough to make no use of, and, still more gracelessly, I have never yet thanked you for it. As for the first part of the offence, my stay at Brussels was not very long. I had a great deal to see there; moreover, I got among the old books; and having a sort of instinct which makes me as much as possible get out of the way of drawing-rooms, because I have an awkward feeling of being in the way when in them, I was much more at my ease when looking at Emperors and Princes in the crowd, than I should have been in the room with them.

"How I should have rejoiced if we had met at Waterloo! This feeling I had and expressed upon the ground. You have pictured it with your characteristic force and animation. My poem will reach you in a few weeks: it is so different in its kind, that, however kindly malice may be disposed, it will not

be possible to institute a comparison with yours. I take a different point of time and a wider range, leaving the battle untouched, and describing the field only such as it was when I surveyed it. . . . .

"Mountaineer as I am, the cultivated scenery of Flanders delighted me. I have seen no town so interesting as Bruges, — no country in a state so perfect as to its possible production of what is beautiful and useful, as the environs of that city and the Pays de Waes. Of single objects, the finest which I saw were the market-place at Brussels and at Ypres, and the town-house at Louvain; the most extraordinary, as well as the most curious, the cathedral at Aix-la-Chapelle, which is, perhaps, the most curious church in existence. The most impressive were the quarries of Maestricht. I found a good deal of political discontent, particularly in the Liege country — a general sense of insecurity, — a very prevalent belief that England had let Bonaparte loose from Elba, which I endeavoured in vain to combat; and a very proper degree of disappointment and indignation that he had not been put to death as he deserved — a feeling in which I heartily concurred.

"Did I ever thank you for the Lord of the Isles? There are pictures in it which are not surpassed in any of your poems, and in the first part especially, a mixture of originality and animation and beauty, which is seldom found. I wished the Lord himself had been more worthy of the good fortune which you bestowed upon him. The laurel which it has pleased you, rather than any other person, to bestow upon me, has taken me in for much dogged work in rhyme;

otherwise, I am inclined to think that my service to the Muses has been long enough, and that I should, perhaps, have claimed my discharge. The ardour of youth is gone by; however I may have fallen short of my own aspirations, my best is done, and I ought to prefer those employments which require the matured faculties and collected stores of declining life. You will receive the long-delayed conclusion of my Brazilian history in the course of the summer. It has much curious matter respecting savage life, a full account of the Jesuit establishments, and a war in Pernambuco, which will be much to your liking.

"Remember me to Mrs. Scott and your daughter, who is old enough to be entitled to these courtesies, and believe me, my dear Scott,

Yours very affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Sharon Turner, Esq.

"Keswick, April 2. 1816.

"My dear Turner,

"You will shortly, I trust, receive my Pilgrimage, the notes and title-page to which would have been at this time in the printer's hands, if I had not been palsied by the severe illness of my son, who is at this time in such a state that I know not whether there be more cause for fear or for hope. In the disposition of mind which an affliction of this kind induces, there is no person whom I feel so much inclined to converse with as with you.

"I have touched, in the latter part of my poem, upon the general course of human events, and the prospects of society. But perhaps I have not explained myself as fully and as clearly as if I had been writing in prose. The preponderance of good, and the progressiveness of truth and knowledge and general well-being, I clearly perceive; but I have delivered an opinion that this tendency to good is not an over-ruling necessity, and that that which *is*, is not necessarily the best that might have been, for this, in my judgment, would interfere with that free agency upon which all our virtues, and indeed the great scheme of Revelation itself, are founded.

"Time, my own heart, and, more than all other causes, the sorrows with which it has been visited (in the course of a life that, on the whole, has been happy in a degree vouchsafed to few, even among the happiest), have made me fully sensible, that the highest happiness exists, as the only consolation is to be found, in a deep and habitual feeling of devotion. Long ere this would I have preached what I feel upon this subject, if the door had been open to me; but it is one thing to conform to the Church, preserving that freedom of mind which in religion, more than in all other things, is especially valuable; and another to subscribe solemnly to its articles. Christianity exists nowhere in so pure a form as in our own Church; but even there it is mingled with much alloy, from which I know not how it will be purified. I have an instinctive abhorrence of bigotry. When Dissenters talk of the Establishment, they make me feel like a high Churchman; and when I get among

high Churchmen, I am ready to take shelter in dissent.

"You have thrown a new light upon the York and Lancaster age of our history, by showing the connection of those quarrels with the incipient spirit of Reformation. I wish we had reformed the monastic institutions instead of overthrowing them. Mischievous as they are in Catholic countries, they have got this good about them, that they hold up something besides worldly distinction to the respect and admiration of the people, and fix the standard of virtues higher than we do in Protestant countries. Would that we had an order of Beguines in England! There are few subjects which have been so unfairly discussed as monastic institutions: the Protestant condemns them in the lump, and the Romanist crams his legends down your throat. The truth is, that they began in a natural and good feeling, though somewhat exaggerated, — that they produced the greatest public good in their season, that they were abominably perverted, and that the good which they now do, wherever they exist, is much less than the evil. Yet, if you had seen, as I once did, a Franciscan of fourscore, with a venerable head and beard, standing in the cloister of his convent, where his brothers lay beneath his feet, and telling his beads, with a countenance expressive of the most perfect and peaceful piety, you would have felt with me how desirable it was that there should be such institutions for minds so constituted. The total absence of religion from our poor-houses, alms-houses, and hospitals, is as culpable in one way as the excess of superstition is in

another. I was greatly shocked at a story which I once heard from Dr. Gooch. A woman of the town was brought to one of the hospitals, having been accidentally poisoned. Almost the last words which she uttered were, that this was a blasted life, and she was glad to have done with it! Who will not wish that she had been kissing the crucifix, and listening in full faith to the most credulous priest! I say this more with reference to her feelings at that moment, and the effect upon others, than as to her own future state, however awful that consideration may be. The mercy of God is infinite; and it were too dreadful to believe that they who have been most miserable here, should be condemned to endless misery hereafter.

"But I will have done with these topics, because I wish to say something respecting your second volume. You have surprised me by the additions you have made to our knowledge of our own early poetry. I had no notion that the Hermit of Hampole was so considerable a personage, nor that there remained such a mass of inedited poetry of that age. The Antiquarian Society would do well to publish the whole, however much it may be. You are aware how much light it would throw upon the history of our language, of our manners, and even of civil transaction; — for all these things I should most gladly peruse the whole mass. St. Francisco Xavier is not the Xavier who wrote the Persian Life of Christ. In p. 3. you mention some novel verses which relate to Portuguese history. If the Scald Halldon's poem be not too long, may I request you to translate it for me, as a document for my history. Observe, that

this request is purely conditional, as regarding the extent of the poem. If it is more than a half hour's work, it would be unreasonable to ask for time which you employ so well, and of which you have so little to spare.

"Remember us to Mrs. Turner, Alfred, and your daughter. We are in great anxiety, and with great cause, but there is hope. My wish at such time is akin to Macbeth's, but in a different spirit — a longing that the next hundred years were over, and that we were in a better world, where happiness is permanent, and there is neither change nor evil.

"God bless you!

Yours very affectionately,

R. SOUTHEY."

In the foregoing letter, my father speaks of his being at that time in a state of great anxiety, on account of the illness of his only boy Herbert, then ten years old, and in all respects a child after his father's own heart. Having been not only altogether educated by his father, but also his constant companion and playfellow, he was associated with all his thoughts, and closely connected with all the habits of his daily life.

He seems, indeed, with all due allowance for parental partiality, to have been one of those children, of only too fair a promise, possessing a quietness of disposition hardly natural at that active age, and generally indicative of an innate feebleness of constitution, and evincing a quickness of intellect and a

love of study which seem to show that the mind has, as it were, outgrown the body.

This I gather, not merely from my father's own letters, but from those who well remember the boy himself, and who speak of him as having been far beyond his age in understanding, and as bearing this painful and fatal illness with a patience and fortitude uncommon even in riper years.

This illness had now lasted for several weeks, and being of a strange and complicated nature, the want of that medical skill and experience which is only to be found in large towns, added much to the parents' anxiety and distress.

Subsequent examination, however (showing a great accumulation of matter at the heart), proved that no skill could have availed. After a period of much suffering, he was released on the 17th of April. The following letters have a painful interest: —

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Wednesday, April 17. 1816.

"My dear Bedford,

"Here is an end of hope and of fear, but not of suffering. His sufferings, however, are over, and, thank God, his passage was perfectly easy. He fell asleep, and is now in a better state of existence, for which his nature was more fitted than for this. You, more than most men, can tell what I have lost, and yet you are far from knowing how large a portion of my hopes and happiness will be laid in the grave with

Herbert. For years it has been my daily prayer that I might be spared this affliction.

"I am much reduced in body by this long and sore suffering, but I am perfectly resigned, and do not give way to grief.

"In his desk there are the few letters which I had written to him, in the joy of my heart. I will fold up these and send them to you, that they may be preserved when I am gone, in memory of him and of me.* Should you survive me, you will publish such parts of my correspondence as are proper, for the benefit of my family. My dear Grosvenor, I wish you would make the selection while you can do it without sorrow, while it is uncertain which of us shall be left to regret the other. You are the fit person to do this; and it will be well to burn in time what is to be suppressed.

"I will not venture to relate the boy's conduct during his whole illness. I dare not trust myself to attempt this. But nothing could be more calm, more patient, more collected, more dutiful, more admirable.

"Oh! that I may be able to leave this country! The wound will never close while I remain in it. You would wonder to see me, how composed I am. Thank God, I can control myself for the sake of others; but it is a life-long grief, and do what I can to lighten it, the burden will be as heavy as I can bear.

R. S.

* These letters have not come into my hands. It does not appear that they have been preserved.

"I wish you would tell Knox* what has happened. He was very kind to Herbert, and deserves that I should write to him."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"April 18. 1816.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"Wherefore do I write to you? Alas, because I know not what to do. To-morrow, perhaps, may bring with it something like the beginning of relief. To-day I hope I shall support myself, or rather that God will support me, for I am weak as a child, in body even more than in mind. My limbs tremble under me; long anxiety has wasted me to the bone, and I fear it will be long before grief will suffer me to recruit. I am seriously apprehensive for the shock which my health seems to have sustained; yet I am wanting in no effort to appear calm and to console others; and those who are about me give me credit for a fortitude which I do not possess. Many blessings are left me—abundant blessings, more than I have deserved, more than I had ever reason to expect or even to hope. I have strong ties to life, and many duties yet to perform. Believe me, I see these things as they ought to be seen. Reason will do something, Time more, Religion most of all. The loss is but for

* A schoolfellow of my father's at Westminster, who was afterwards one of the masters there.

this world; but as long as I remain in this world I shall feel it.

"Some way my feelings will vent themselves. I have thought of endeavouring to direct their course, and may, perhaps, set about a monument in verse for him and for myself, which may make our memories inseparable.

"There would be no wisdom in going from home. The act of returning to it would undo all the benefit I might receive from change of circumstance for some time yet. Edith feels this; otherwise, perhaps, we might have gone to visit Tom in his new habitation. Summer is at hand. While there was a hope of Herbert's recovery, this was a frequent subject of pleasurable consideration; it is now a painful thought, and I look forward with a sense of fear to the season which brings with it life and joy to those who are capable of receiving them. You, more than most men, are aware of the extent of my loss, and how, as long as I remain here, every object within and without, and every hour of every day, must bring it fresh to recollection. Yet the more I consider the difficulties of removing, the greater they appear; and perhaps by the time it would be possible, I may cease to desire it.

"Whenever I have leisure (will that ever be?) I will begin my own memoirs, to serve as a post-obit for those of my family who may survive me. They will be so far provided for as to leave me no uneasiness on that score. My life insurance is 4000*l.*; my books (for there is none to inherit them now) may be worth 1500*l.*; my copyrights, perhaps, not less; and

you will be able to put together letters and fragments, which, when I am gone, will be acceptable articles in the market. Probably there would, on the whole, be 10,000*l.* forthcoming. The whole should be Edith's during her life, and afterwards divided equally among the surviving children. I shall name John May and Neville White for executors,—both men of business, and both my dear and zealous friends. But do you take care of my papers, and publish my remains. I have perhaps much underrated the value of what will be left. A selection of my reviewals may be reprinted, with credit to my name and with profit. You will not wonder that I have fallen into this strain. One grave is at this moment made ready; and who can tell how soon another may be required? I pray, however, for continued life. There may be, probably there are, many afflictions for me in store, but the worst is past. I have more than once thought of Mr. Roberts; when he hears of my loss, it will for a moment freshen the recollection of his own.

"It is some relief to write to you, after the calls which have this day been made upon my fortitude. I have not been found wanting; and Edith, throughout the whole long trial, has displayed the most exemplary self-control. We never approached him but with composed countenances and words of hope; and for a mother to do this, hour after hour, and night after night, while her heart was breaking, is perhaps the utmost effort of which our nature is capable. Oh! how you would have admired and loved him, had you seen him in these last weeks! But you know something of his character. Never, perhaps,

was child of ten years old so much to his father. Without ever ceasing to treat him as a child, I had made him my companion, as well as playmate and pupil, and he had learnt to interest himself in my pursuits, and take part in all my enjoyments.

"I have sent Edith May to Wordsworth's. Poor child, she is dreadfully distressed; and it has ever been my desire to save them from all the sorrow that can be avoided, and to mitigate, as far as possible, what is inevitable. Something it is to secure for them a happy childhood. Never was a happier than Herbert's. He knew not what unkindness or evil were, except by name. His whole life was passed in cheerful duty, and love and enjoyment. If I did not hope that I have been useful in my generation, and may still continue to be so, I could wish that I also had gone to rest as early in the day; but my childhood was not like his.

"Let me have some money when you can, that these mournful expenses may be discharged. For five weeks my hand has been palsied, and this brings with it a loss of means — an evil inseparable from my way of life. To-morrow I shall endeavour to resume my employments. You may be sure, also, that I shall attend to my health; nothing which exercise and diet can afford will be neglected; and whenever I feel that change of air and of scene could benefit me, the change shall be tried. I am perfectly aware how important an object this is; the fear is, lest my sense of its moment should produce an injurious anxiety. God bless you!

R. S.

"You would save me some pain by correcting the remaining proofs*, for the sight of that book must needs be trying to me."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Saturday, April 20. 1816.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"Desire Gifford to reserve room for me in this number: I will not delay it beyond the first week in May; he may rely upon this: I am diligently at work; the exertion is wholesome for me at this season, and I want the money. It is the La Vendée article.

"A proof has reached me, so your trouble on that score may be spared.

"I am in all respects acting as you would wish to see me, not unmindful of the blessings which are left and the duties which I have to perform. But indeed, Grosvenor, it is only a deep, heartfelt, and ever-present faith which could support me. If what I have lost were lost for ever, I should sink under the affliction. Throughout the whole sorrow, long and trying as it has been, Edith has demeaned herself with a strength of mind and a self-control deserving the highest admiration. To be as happy ever again as I have been is impossible; my future happiness must be of a different kind, but the difference will be in kind rather than degree; there will

* Of the Pilgrimage to Waterloo.

be less of this world in it, more of the next, therefore will it be safe and durable.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To John May, Esq.

"Keswick, April 22. 1816.

"My dear Friend,

"I thank you for your letter, for your sympathy, and for your prayers. We have been supported even beyond my hopes, and according to our need. I do not feel any return of strength, but it will soon be restored; anxiety has worn me to the bone. While that state continued I was incapable of any employment, and my time was passed day and night alternately in praying that the worst might be averted, and in preparing for it if it might take place.

"Three things I prayed for, — the child's recovery if it might please God; that if this might not be, his passage might be rendered easy; and that we might be supported in our affliction. The two latter petitions were granted, and I am truly thankful. But when the event was over, then, like David, I roused myself, and gave no way to unavailing grief, acting in all things as I should wish others to act when my hour also is come. I employ myself incessantly, taking, however, every day as much exercise as I can bear without injurious fatigue, which is not much. My appetite is good, and I have now no want of sleep. Edith is perfectly calm and resigned. Her

fortitude is indeed exemplary to the highest degree, but her employments do not withdraw her from herself as mine do, and therefore I fear she has more to struggle with. Perhaps we were too happy before this dispensation struck us. Perhaps it was expedient for us that our hearts should be drawn more strongly towards another world. This is the use of sorrow, and to this use I trust our sorrow will be sanctified.

Believe me, my dear Friend,
Ever most truly and affectionately yours,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To William Wordsworth, Esq.

"Monday, April 22. 1816.

"My dear Wordsworth,

"You were right respecting the nature of my support under this affliction; there is but one source of consolation, and of that source I have drunk largely. When you shall see how I had spoken of my happiness but a few weeks ago, you will read with tears of sorrow what I wrote with tears of joy. And little did I think how soon and how literally another part of this mournful poem was to be fulfilled, when I said in it —

> 'To earth I should have sunk in my despair,
> Had I not clasp't the Cross, and been supported there.'

"I thank God for the strength with which we have borne this trial. It is not possible for woman to have

acted with more fortitude than Edith has done through the whole sharp suffering; she has rather set an example than followed it. My bodily frame is much shaken. A little time and care will recruit it, and the mind is sound. I am fully sensible of the blessings which are left me, which far exceed those of most men. I pray for continued life that I may fulfil my duties towards those whom I love. I employ myself, and I look forward to the end with faith and with hope, as one whose treasure is laid up in Heaven; and where the treasure is, there will the heart be also.

"At present it would rather do me hurt than good to see you. I am perfectly calm and in full self-possession; but I know my own weakness as well as my strength, and the wholesomest regimen for a mind like mine, is assiduous application to pursuits which call forth enough of its powers to occupy without exhausting it. It is well for me that I can do this. I take regular exercise and am very careful of myself.

"Many will feel for me, but none can tell what I have lost: the head and flower of my earthly happiness is cut off. But I am *not* unhappy.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Wednesday, April 24. 1816.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"You remember the two remedies for grief of which Pelayo speaks.* I practise what I preach, and have employed myself with a power of exertion at which I myself wonder; taking care so to vary my employments as not for any one to possess my mind too fully. I take regular exercise; I take tonics; I eat, drink, and sleep. See if this be not doing well. I converse as usual, and can at times be cheerful, but my happiness can never again be what it has been. Many blessings do I possess, but the prime blessing, the flower of my hopes, the central jewel of the ring, is gone. An early admiration of what is good in the stoical philosophy, and an active and elastic mind, have doubtless been great means of supporting me; but they would have been insufficient without a deeper principle; and I verily believe that were it not for the consolations which religion affords,—consolations which in time will ripen into hope and joy, — I should sink under an affliction which is greater than any man can conceive. You best can judge what the privation must be, and you can but judge imperfectly.

* "Nature hath assigned
Two sovereign remedies for human grief:
Religion, — surest, firmest, first, and best;
And strenuous action next."

Roderick, Canto xiv.

"Enough of this. I shall soon find a better mode of at once indulging and regulating these feelings. Upon this subject I have thoughts in my head which will, by God's blessing, produce good and lasting fruit.

"At present one of my daily employments is the Carmen Nuptiale, which is now nearly completed. It will extend to about a hundred and ten stanzas, the same metre as the Pilgrimage, which printed in the same manner may run to seventy pages,—say three sheets. Its English title the Lay of the Laureate, which is not only a *taking* title for an advertisement, but a remarkably good one. It is for Longman to determine in what form he will print it, and what number of copies: quarto pamphlets I think are not liked for their inconvenient size.

"There must be a presentation copy bound for the Princess. Through what channel shall I convey it? Lord William Gordon would deliver it for me if I were to ask him. Can you put me in a better way? Would Herries like to do it, or is it proper to ask him?

"In a few days I shall send you the MSS.; the printing will be done presently. It comes too close upon the Pilgrimage; but whatever may be thought of it at Court, it will do me credit now and hereafter. I am very desirous of completing it, that I may have leisure for what lies nearer my heart.

"I will have a copy for Edith bound exactly like the court copy. What would it cost to have both these printed upon vellum? more, I suspect, than the fancy is worth.

"Press upon Gifford my earnest desire that the article of which the first portion accompanies this note may appear in the present number. It is of consequence to me, and the subject is in danger of becoming stale if it be delayed: dwell upon this point. It will be as interesting a paper as he has ever received from me.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, April 26. 1816.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"Herbert died on the 17th, and he was in the tenth year of his age; say nothing more than this. How much does it contain to me, and to the world how little!

"I have great power of exertion, and this is of signal benefit at this time. My mind is closely employed throughout the whole day. I do more in one day than I used to do in three: hitherto the effect is good, but I shall watch myself well, and be careful not to exact more than the system will endure. I have certainly gained strength; but as you may suppose every circumstance of spring and of reviving nature brings with it thoughts that touch me in my heart of hearts. Do not, however, imagine that I am unhappy. I know what I have lost, and that no loss could possibly have been greater; but it is only for a time; and you know what my habitual and rooted feelings are upon this subject.

"It is not unlikely that Gifford will do *for* me in this number what he has done *by* me in others — displace some other person's article to make room for mine. He will act wisely if he does so, for the freshness of the subject will else evaporate. I shall finish it with all speed upon this supposition. It would surprise you were you to see what I get through in a day.

"The remainder of the proofs might as well have been sent me. Surrounded as I am with mementos, there was little reason for wishing to keep them at a distance. And however mournful it must ever be to remember the Proem, and the delight which it gave when the proof sheet arrived, I am glad that it was written, and Edith feels upon this point as I do. The proofs had better come to me, if it is not too late. I can verify the quotations, which it is impossible for you to do, and may perhaps add something.

"Tell Pople I shall be obliged to him if he will make some speed with the History of Brazil; that I find it impossible to comprise it in two volumes; a third there must be, but it will go to press as soon as the second is printed; and that there will be no delay on my part (that is, as far as man can answer for himself) till the whole is completed. I send a portion of copy in the frank which covers this. If I mistake not, this second volume will be found very amusing as well as very curious.

"Edith May returned from Wordsworth's this morning, — we missed her greatly, and yet her return was a renewal of sorrow. Her mother behaves

incomparably well: it is not possible that any mother could suffer more, or support her sufferings better. She knows that we have abundant blessings left, but feels that the flower of all is gone; and this feeling must be for life. Bitter as it is it is wholesome.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"April 30. 1816.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"Time passes on. I employ myself, and have recovered strength; but in point of spirits, I rather lose ground. The cause, perhaps, is obvious. At first, we make great efforts to force the mind from thoughts which are intolerably painful; but as, from time, they become endurable, less effort is made to avoid them, and the poignancy of grief settles into melancholy. Both with Edith and myself, this seems to be the case. Certain I am that nothing but the full assurance of immortality could prevent me from sinking under an affliction which is greater than any stranger could possibly believe; and thankful I am that my feelings have been so long and so habitually directed toward this point. You probably know my poems better than most people, and may perceive how strongly my mind has been impressed upon this most consoling subject.

"Yesterday I finished the main part of the Lay. There remain only six or eight stanzas as a L'Envoy,

which I may, perhaps, complete this night; then I shall send you the whole in one packet through Gifford. I have said nothing about it to Longman, for I think it very probable that you may advise me not to publish the poem now it is written, lest it should give offence; and having satisfied myself by writing it, it is quite indifferent to me whether it appears now or after my decease. The emolument to be derived from it is too insignificant to be thought of, and the credit which I should gain, I can very well do without. So take counsel with any body you please, and remember that I, who am easily enough persuaded in any case, am in this perfectly unconcerned; for were it a thing of course that I should produce a poem on this occasion, there is at this time, God knows, sufficient reason why I might stand excused.

"Do not imagine that the poem has derived the slightest cast of colouring from my present state of mind. The plan is precisely what was originally formed. William Nichol is likely to judge as well as any man whether there be any unfitness in publishing it. You are quite aware that I neither wish to court favour nor to give offence, and that the absurdity of taking offence (if it were taken) would excite in me more pity than resentment.

"Good night! I am going to the poem in hope of completing it. I cannot yet bear to be unemployed, and this I feel severely. You know how much I used to unbend, and play with the children, in frequent intervals of study, as though I were an idle man. Of this I am quite incapable, and shall long

continue so. No circumstance of my former life ever brought with it so great a change as that which I daily and hourly feel, and perhaps shall never cease to feel. Yet I am thankful for having possessed this child so long; for worlds I would not but have been his father. Of all the blessings which it has pleased God to vouchsafe me, this was and *is* the greatest.

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Friday, May 3. 1816.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"You will have seen, by my last letters, that I am not exhausting myself by over-exertion. On the contrary, for many days I have been forcing myself to the more difficult necessity of bearing my own recollections. Time will soften them down; indeed, they now have, and always have had, all the alleviation which an assured hope and faith can bestow; and when I give way to tears, which is only in darkness or in solitude, they are not tears of unmingled pain. I begin to think that change of place would not be desirable, and that the pain of leaving a place where I have enjoyed so many years of such great happiness, is more than it is wise to incur without necessity. Nor could I reconcile either Edith or myself to the thought of leaving poor Mrs. Wilson*,

* Mrs. Wilson (the "aged friend" mentioned in the stanzas quoted from the Pilgrimage to Waterloo) had been housekeeper to Mr. Jack-

whose heart is half broken already, and to whom our departure would be a death-stroke. Her days, indeed, must necessarily be few, and her life-lease will probably expire before the end of the term to which we are looking on.

"Murray has sent me 50*l.* for the La Vendée article, which makes me indifferent when it appears; and proposes to me half a dozen other subjects at 100*l.* each, at which rate I suppose in future I shall supply him with an article every quarter. This will set me at ease in money matters, about which, thank God and the easy disposition with which he has blessed me, I have never been too anxious.

"It is needless to say I shall be glad to see you here, but rather at some future time, when you will find me a better companion, and when your company would do me more good. Nor, indeed, must you leave your mother; her deliverance from the infirmities of life cannot be long deferred by any human skill, or any favourable efforts of nature. Whenever that event takes place, you will need such relief as change of scene can afford; and whenever it may be, I hold myself ready to join you and accompany you to the Continent, for as long a time as you can be spared from your office, and as long a journey as that

son, the former owner of Greta Hall, and she continued to occupy part of one of the two houses, which, though altogether in my father's occupation, had not been wholly thrown together as was afterwards done. She had once been the belle of Keswick; and was a person of a marvellous sweetness of temper and sterling good sense, as much attached to the children of the family as if they had been her own, and remembered still by every surviving member of it with respect and affection.

time may enable us to take. Remember this, and look to it as a fitting arrangement which will benefit us both. God bless you!

R. S."

To Chauncey Hare Townshend, Esq.

"Keswick, May 16. 1816.

". . . . . The loss which I have sustained is, I believe, heavier than any like affliction would have proved to almost any other person, from the circumstance of my dear son's character, and the peculiar habits of my life. The joyousness of my disposition has received its death-wound; but there are still so many blessings left me, that I should be most ungrateful did I not feel myself abundantly rich in the only treasures which I have ever coveted. Three months ago, when I looked around, I knew no man so happy as myself, that is, no man who so entirely possessed all that his heart desired, those desires being such as bore the severest scrutiny of wisdom. The difference now is, that what was then the flower of my earthly happiness is now become a prominent object of my heavenly hopes, — that I have this treasure in reversion, instead of actually possessing it; but the reversion is indefeasible, and when it is restored to me it will be for ever; the separation which death makes is but for a time.

"These are my habitual feelings, not the offspring

of immediate sorrow, for I have felt sorrow ere this, and, I hope, have profited by it.

"The Roman Catholics go too far in weaning their hearts from the world, and fall in consequence into the worst practical follies which could result from Manicheism. We lay up treasure in heaven when we cherish the domestic charities. 'They sin who tell us love can die,'* and they also err grievously who suppose that natural affections tend to wean us from God. Far otherwise! They develope virtues, of the existence of which in our own hearts we should else be unconscious; and binding us to each other, they bind us also to our common Parent.

"Let me see your poem when you have finished it, and tell me something more of yourself, where your home is, and where you have been educated. Anything that you may communicate upon this subject will interest me. In my communication with Kirke White, and with poor Dusautoy, I have blamed myself for repressing the expression of interest concerning them, when it has been too late. Perhaps they have thought me cold and distant, than which nothing can be farther from my nature; but may your years be many and prosperous. God bless you!

Your affectionate Friend,

R. SOUTHEY."

* Kehama, Canto ii. v. 10.

To the Rev. Nicholas Lightfoot.

"May, 1816.

"My dear Lightfoot,

"I thank you for your letter. You may remember that in my youth I had a good deal of such practical philosophy as may be learned from Epictetus; it has often stood me in good stead; it affords strength, but no consolation; consolation can be found only in religion, and there I find it. My dear Lightfoot, it is now full two-and-twenty years since you and I shook hands at our last parting. In all likelihood, the separation between my son and me will not be for so long a time; in the common course of nature it cannot possibly be much longer, and I may be summoned to rejoin him before the year, yea, before the passing day or the passing hour be gone. Death has so often entered my doors, that he and I have long been familiar. The loss of five brothers and sisters (four of whom I remember well), of my father and mother, of a female cousin who grew up with me, and lived with me; of two daughters, and of several friends (among them two of the dearest friends that ever man possessed), had very much weaned my heart from this world, or, more properly speaking, had fixed its thoughts and desires upon a better state wherein there shall be no such separation, before this last and severest affliction. Still it would be senseless and ungrateful to the greatest degree, if I were not to feel and acknowledge the abundant blessings that I still possess, especially believing,

trusting, *knowing*, as I do, in the full assurance of satisfied reason and settled faith, that the treasure which has been taken from me now, is laid up in heaven, there to be repossessed with ample increase.

"Whenever I see Crediton, I must journey into the West for that sole purpose. My last ties with my native city were cut up by the roots two years ago, by the death of one of my best and dearest friends, and I shall never have heart to enter it again. Will you not give me one of your summer holidays, and visit, not only an old friend, but the part of England which is most worth visiting, and which attracts visitors from all parts? . . . .

"God bless you!

Yours affectionately,

R. SOUTHEY."

To the Rev. Herbert Hill.

"Keswick, May 4. 1816.

"My dear Uncle

"My estimate of human life is more favourable than yours. If death were the termination of our existence, then, indeed, I should wish rather to have been born a beast, or never to have been born at all; but considering nothing more certain than that this life is preparatory to a higher state of being, I am thankful for the happiness I have enjoyed, for the blessings which are left me, and for those to which I look with sure and certain hope. With me the enjoyments of life have more than counterbalanced its

anxieties and its pains. No man can possibly have been happier; and at this moment, when I am suffering under almost the severest loss which could have befallen me, I am richer both in heart and hope than if God had never given me the child whom it hath pleased him to take away. My heart has been exercised with better feelings during his life, and is drawn nearer towards Heaven by his removal. I do not recover spirits, but my strength is materially recruited, and I am not unhappy.

"I have employed myself with more than ordinary diligence. You will receive portions of my History in quick succession. I find abundant materials for a third volume, and have therefore determined not to injure a work, which has cost me so much labour, by attempting to compress it because the public would prefer two volumes to three. . . . . You will see that the story of Cardenas * is not an episode: it is the beginning of the great struggle with the Jesuits. This volume will bring the narrative down to the beginning of the last century, and conclude with the account of the manners of Brazil at that time, and the state of the country, as far as my documents enable me to give it. . . . . .

"You see I have not been idle; indeed, at present there is more danger of my employing myself too much than too little. . . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

* Hist. of Brazil, ch. xxv.

To Mr. Neville White.

"Keswick, May 4. 1816.

"My dear Neville,

"Thank you for your letter. I have had the prayers and the sympathy of many good men, and perhaps never child was lamented by so many persons of ripe years, unconnected with him by ties of consanguinity. But those of my friends who knew him loved him for his own sake, and many there are who grieve at his loss for mine. I dare not pursue this subject. My health is better, my spirits are not. I employ myself as much as possible; but there must be intervals of employment, and the moment that my mind is off duty, it recurs to the change which has taken place: that change, I fear, will long be the first thought when I wake in the morning, and the last when I lie down at night. Yet, Neville, I feel and acknowledge the uses of this affliction. Perhaps I was too happy; perhaps my affections were fastened by too many roots to this world; perhaps this precarious life was too dear to me.

"Edith sets me the example of suppressing her own feelings for the sake of mine. We have many blessings left,—abundant ones, for which to be thankful. I know, too, to repine because Herbert is removed, would be as selfish as it would be sinful. Yea, I believe that, in my present frame of mind, I could lay my children upon the altar, like Abraham, and say, 'Thy will be done.' This I trust will continue, when the depressing effects of grief shall have passed away. I hope in time to recover some portion

of my constitutional cheerfulness, but never to lose that feeling with which I look on to eternity. I always knew the instability of earthly happiness; this woeful experience will make me contemplate more habitually and more ardently that happiness which is subject neither to chance nor change.

"Do not suppose that I am indulging in tears, or giving way to painful recollections. On the contrary, I make proper exertions, and employ myself assiduously for as great a portion of the day as is compatible with health. For the first week I did as much every day as would at other times have seemed the full and overflowing produce of three. This, of course, I could not continue, but at the time it was salutary. God bless you, my dear Neville!

Yours most affectionately,

R. SOUTHEY."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"May 15. 1816.

"My dear G.,

"\. . . . . .

If egotism* in poetry be a sin, God forgive all great poets! But perhaps it is allowable in them, when they have been dead a few centuries; and therefore they may be permitted to speak of themselves and appreciate themselves, provided they leave especial

* This refers to some observations which had been made upon the Procm to the marriage song for the Princess Charlotte.

orders that such passages be not made public until the statute of critical limitation expires. Who can be weak enough to suppose that the man who wrote that third stanza would be deterred from printing it by any fear of reprehension on the score of vanity? Who is to reprehend him? None of his peers assuredly; not one person who will sympathise with him as he reads; not one person who enters into his thoughts and feelings; not one person who can enter into the strain and enjoy it. Those persons, indeed, may who live wholly in the present; but I have taken especial care to make it known, that a faith in hereafter is as necessary for the intellectual as for the moral character, and that to the man of letters (as well as the Christian) the *present* forms but the slightest portion of his existence. He who would leave any durable monument behind him, must live in the past and look to the future. The poets of old scrupled not to say this; and who is there who is not delighted with these passages, whenever time has set his seal upon the prophecy which they contain?

. . . . . .

"My spirits do not recover: that they should again be what they have been, I do not expect,—that, indeed, is impossible. But, except when reading or writing, I am deplorably depressed: the worst is, that I cannot conceal this. To affect anything like my old hilarity, and that presence of joyous feelings which carried with it a sort of perpetual sunshine, is, of course, impossible; but you must imagine that the absence of all this must make itself felt. The change in my daily occupations, in my sports, my relaxations,

my hopes, is so great, that it seems to have changed my very nature also. Nothing is said, but I often find anxious eyes fixed upon me, and watching my countenance. The best thing I can say is, that time passes on, and sooner or later remedies everything.

. . . . . .

"I will have the books bound separately, because a book is a book, and two books are worth as much again as one; and if a man's library comes to the hammer, this is of consequence; and whenever I get my knock-down blow, the poor books will be knocked down after me. But why did I touch upon this string? Alas! Grosvenor, it is because all things bear upon one subject, the centre of the whole circumference of all my natural associations. . . . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Chauncey Hare Townshend, Esq.

"Keswick, June 5. 1816.

"Thank you for both your letters. The history of your school-boy days reminds me of my own childhood and youth. I had a lonely childhood, and suffered much from tyranny at school, till I outgrew it, and came to have authority myself. In one respect, my fortune seems to have been better than yours, or my nature more accommodating. Where intellectual sympathy was not to be found, it was sufficient for me if moral sympathy existed. A kind heart and a gentle disposition won my friendship

more readily than brighter talents, where these were wanting. . . . . .

"I left Westminster in a perilous state, — a heart full of feeling and poetry, a head full of Rousseau and Werter, and my religious principles shaken by Gibbon: many circumstances tended to give me a wrong bias, none to lead me right, except adversity, the wholesomest of all discipline. An instinctive modesty, rather than any purer cause, preserved me for a time from all vice. A severe system of stoical morality then came to its aid. I made Epictetus, for many months, literally my manual. The French revolution was then in its full career. I went to Oxford in January, 1793, a Stoic and a Republican. I had no acquaintance at the college, which was in a flagitious state of morals. I refused to wear powder, when every other man in the university wore it, because I thought the custom foolish and filthy; and I refused even to drink more wine than suited my inclination and my principles. Before I had been a week in the college, a little party had got round me, glad to form a sober society, of which I was the centre. Here I became intimate with Edmund Seward, whose death was the first of those privations which have, in great measure, weaned my heart from the world. He confirmed in me all that was good. Time and reflection, the blessings and the sorrows of life, and I hope I may add, with unfeigned humility, the grace of God, have done the rest. Large draughts have been administered to me from both urns. No man has suffered keener sorrows, no man has been more profusely blest. Four months ago no human

being could possibly be happier than I was, or richer in all that a wise heart could desire. The difference now is, that what was then my chief treasure is now laid up in Heaven.

"Your manuscript goes by the next coach. I shall be glad to see the conclusion, and any other of your verses, Latin or English. Is any portion of your time given to modern languages? If not, half an hour a day might be borrowed for German, the want of which I have cause to regret. I was learning it with my son; and shall never have heart to resume that as a solitary study which in his fellowship was made so delightful. The most ambitious founder of a family never built such hopes upon a child as I did on mine; and entirely resembling me as he did, if it had been God's will that he should have grown up on earth, he would have shared my pursuits, partaken all my thoughts and feelings, and have in this manner succeeded to my plans and papers as to an intellectual inheritance. God bless you!

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To John May, Esq.

"Keswick, June 12. 1816.

"My dear Friend,

"I have not written to you for some weeks. Time passes on, and the lapse of two months may perhaps enable me now to judge what permanent effect this late affliction may produce upon my habitual state of mind. It will be long before I shall cease to be

sensible of the change in my relaxations, my pleasures, hopes, plans, and prospects; very long, I fear, will it be before a sense of that change will cease to be my latest thought at night and my earliest in the morning. Yet I am certainly resigned to this privation; and this I say, not in the spirit with which mere philosophy teaches us to bear that which is inevitable, but with a Christian conviction that this early removal is a blessing to him who is removed. We read of persons who have suddenly become gray from violent emotions of grief or fear. I feel in some degree as if I had passed at once from boyhood to the decline of life. I had never ceased to be a boy in cheerfulness till now. All those elastic spirits are now gone; nor is it in the nature of things that they should return. I am still capable of enjoyment, and trust that there is much in store for me; but there is an end of that hilarity which I possessed more uninterruptedly, and in a greater degree, than any person with whom I was ever acquainted. You advised me to write down my recollections of Herbert while they were fresh. I dare not undertake the task. Something akin to it, but in a different form, and with a more extensive purpose, I have begun; but my eyes and my head suffer too much in the occupation for me to pursue it as yet; and as these effects cannot be concealed, I must avoid as much as possible all that would produce them. This, believe me, is an effort of forbearance, for my heart is very much set upon completing what I have planned. The effect upon Edith will be as lasting as upon myself; but she had not the

same exuberance of spirits to lose, and therefore it will be less perceptible. The self-command which she has exercised has been truly exemplary, and commands my highest esteem. Your god-daughter, thank God, is well. Her daily lesson will long be a melancholy task on my part, since it will be a solitary one. She is now so far advanced that I can make some of her exercises of use, and set her to translate passages for my notes, from French, Spanish, or Portuguese. Of course this is not done without some assistance and some correction. Still while she improves herself she is assisting me, and the pleasure that this gives me is worth a great deal. She is a good girl, with a ready comprehension, quick feelings, a tender heart, and an excellent disposition. I pray God that her life may be spared to make me happy while I live, and some one who may be worthy of her when it shall be time for her to contract other ties and other duties.

"I suppose you will receive my Lay in a few days.

"God bless you, my dear friend!

Yours most affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

In this series of melancholy letters there have been several allusions to a monument in verse which my father contemplated raising to the memory of his dear son. This design was never completed, but several hints and touching thoughts were noted down, and about fifty lines written, which seem to be the commencement. The latter part of these I quote here: —

"Short time hath passed since, from my pilgrimage
To my rejoicing home restored, I sung
A true thanksgiving song of pure delight.
Never had man whom Heaven would heap with bliss
More happy day, more glad return than mine.
Yon mountains with their wintry robe were clothed
When, from a heart that overflow'd with joy,
I poured that happy strain. The snow not yet
Upon those mountain sides hath disappeared
Beneath the breath of spring, and in the grave
Herbert is laid, the child who welcomed me
With deepest love upon that happy day.
Herbert, my only and my studious boy;
The sweet companion of my daily walks;
Whose sports, whose studies, and whose thoughts I shared,
Yea, in whose life I lived; in whom I saw
My better part transmitted and improved.
Child of my heart and mind, the flower and crown
Of all my hopes and earthly happiness."

These fragments are published in the latest edition of his poems.

To Chauncey Hare Townshend, Esq.

"Keswick, July 22. 1816.

"My dear Chauncey,

". . . . . It will be unfortunate if chance should not one day bring me within reach of you; but I would rather that chance should bring you to Cumberland, when you can spare a few weeks for such a visit. You will find a bed, plain fare, and a glad welcome; books for wet weather, a boat for sunny evenings; the loveliest parts of this lovely county within reach and within sight; and myself one of the best guides to all the recesses of the vales and mountains. As a geologist, you will enjoy one more pleasure than I do, who am ignorant of every branch

of science. Mineralogy and botany are the only branches which I wish that I had possessed, not from any predilection for either, but because opportunities have fallen in my way for making observations (had I been master of the requisite knowledge) by which others might have been interested and guided. These two are sciences which add to our out-door enjoyments, and have no injurious effects. Chemical and physical studies seem, on the contrary, to draw on very prejudicial consequences. Their utility is not to be doubted; but it appears as if man could not devote himself to these pursuits without blunting his finer faculties.

"This county is very imperfectly visited by many of its numerous guests. They take the regular route, stop at the regular stations, ascend one of the mountains, and then fancy they have seen the Lakes, in which, after a thirteen years' residence, I am every year discovering new scenes of beauty. Here I shall probably pass the remainder of my days. Our church, as you may perhaps recollect, stands at a distance from the town, unconnected with any other buildings, and so as to form a striking and beautiful feature in the vale. The churchyard is as open to the eye and to the breath of heaven as if it were a Druid's place of meeting. There I shall take up my last abode, and it is some satisfaction to think so — to feel as if I were at anchor, and should shift my berth no more. A man whose habitual frame of mind leads him to look forward, is not the worse for treading the churchyard path, with a belief that along that very path his hearse is one day to convey him.

"Do not imagine that I am of a gloomy temper,—far from it; never was man blessed with a more elastic spirit or more cheerful mind; and even now the liquor retains its body and its strength, though it will sparkle no more.

"Your comments upon the Castle of Indolence express the feeling of every true poet; the second part must always be felt as injuring the first. I agree with you, also, as respecting the Minstrel, beautiful and delightful as it is. It still wants that imaginative charm which Thomson has caught from Spenser, but which no poet has ever so entirely possessed as Spenser himself. Among the many plans of my ambitious boyhood, the favourite one was that of completing the Faëry Queen. For this purpose I had collected every hint and indication of what Spenser meant to introduce in the progress of his poem, and had planned the remaining legends in a manner which, as far as I can remember after a lapse of four or five-and-twenty years, was not without some merit. What I have done as a poet falls far short of what I had hoped to do; but in boyhood and in youth I dreamt of poetry alone; and I suppose it is the course of nature, that the ardour which this pursuit requires should diminish as we advance in life. In youth we delight in strong emotions, to be agitated and inflamed with hope, and to weep at tragedy. In maturer life we have no tears to spare; it is more delightful to have our judgment exercised than our feelings.

"God bless you! Come and visit me when you can. I long to see you.

R. S."

To Chauncey Hare Townshend, Esq.

"Keswick, August 17. 1816.

"My dear Chauncey,

"I was from home for a few days' absence when your letter arrived. I have seen too many instances of unjust prepossession to be surprised at them now. Much of my early life was embittered by them when I was about your age; and in later years I have been disinherited by two uncles in succession, for no other assignable or possible reason than the caprice of weak minds and misgoverned tempers. In this manner was I deprived of a good property, which the ordinary course of law would have given me. These things never robbed me of a moment's tranquillity,—never in the slightest degree affected my feelings and spirits, nor ever mingled with my dreams. There is little merit in regarding such things with such philosophy. I suffered no loss, no diminution of any one enjoyment, and should have despised myself if anything so merely external and extraneous could have disturbed me. It is not in the heel, but in the heart, that I am vulnerable; and in the heart I have now been wounded: how deeply, He only who sees the heart can tell.

"Whenever you come I shall rejoice to see you. Do not, however, wind up your expectations too high. In many things I may, in some things I must, disappoint the ideal which you have formed. No man has ever written more faithfully from his heart; but my manners have not the same habitual unreserve as my pen. A disgust at the professions of

friendship and feeling and sentiment in those who have neither the one nor the other, has, perhaps, insensibly led me to an opposite extreme; and in wishing rather *esse quam videri*, I may sometimes have appeared what I am not.

"I would not have you look on to the University with repugnance or dread. My college years were the least beneficial and the least happy of my life; but this was owing to public and private circumstances, utterly unlike those in which you will be placed. The comfort of being domesticated with persons whom you love, you will miss and feel the want of. In other respects, the change will bring with it its advantages. To enter at college, is taking a degree in life, and graduating as a man. I am not sure that there would be either schools or universities in a Utopia of my creation; in the world as it is, both are so highly useful, that the man who has not been at a public school and at college feels his deficiency as long as he lives. You renew old acquaintances at college; you confirm early intimacies. Probably, also, you form new friendships at an age when they are formed with more judgment, and are therefore likely to endure. And one who has been baptized in the springs of Helicon, is in no danger of falling into vice, in a place where vice appears in the most disgusting form.

"There is a paper of mine in the last Quarterly, upon the means of bettering the condition of the poor. You will be interested by a story which it contains of an old woman upon Exmoor. In Wordsworth's blank-verse it would go to every heart. Have

you read The Excursion? and have you read the collection of Wordsworth's other poems, in two octavo volumes? If you have not, there is a great pleasure in store for you. I am no blind admirer of Wordsworth, and can see where he has chosen subjects which are unworthy in themselves, and where the strength of his imagination and of his feeling is directed upon inadequate objects. Notwithstanding these faults, and their frequent occurrence, it is by the side of Milton that Wordsworth will have his station awarded him by posterity. God bless you!

R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Keswick, Aug. 25. 1816.

"My dear Rickman,

"I have been long in your debt; my summers are more like those of the grasshopper than of the ant. Wynn was here nearly a week, and when he departed I rejoined him with my friend Nash at Lowther. . . . . This, and a round home by way of Wordsworth's employed a week; and what with the King of Prussia's librarian, the two secretaries of the Bible Society, and other such out of the way personages who come to me by a sort of instinct, I have had little time and less leisure since my return.

"The last odd personage who made his appearance was Owen of Lanark *, who is neither more nor

* On this subject see Colloquies, vol. i. p. 132. &c.

less than such a Pantisocrat as I was in the days of my youth. He is as ardent now as I was then, and will soon be cried down as a visionary (certainly he proposes to do more than I can believe practicable in this generation); but I will go to Lanark to see what he has done. I conversed with him for about an hour, and, not knowing anything about him, good part of the time elapsed before I could comprehend his views, —so little probable did it appear that any person should come to me with a levelling system of society, and tell me he had been to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Ministers, &c. But he will be here again in a day or two, and meantime I have read a pamphlet which is much more injudicious than his conversation, and will very probably frustrate the good which he might by possibility have produced.

"To this system he says we must come *speedily*. . . . . What he says of the manufacturing system has much weight in it; the machinery which enables us to manufacture for half the world has found its way into other countries; every market is glutted; more goods are produced than can be consumed; and every improvement in mechanism that performs the work of hands, throws so many mouths upon the public,—a growing evil which has been increasing by the premature employment of children, bringing them into competition with the grown workmen when they should have been at school or at play. He wants Government to settle its paupers and supernumerary hands in villages upon waste lands, to live in community; urging that we must go to the root of the evil at once. He talks of what he

has done at Lanark (and this indeed has been much talked of by others); but his address to his people there has much that is misplaced, injudicious, and reprehensible. Did you see him in London? Had we met twenty years ago, the meeting might have influenced both his life and mine in no slight degree. During those years he has been a practical man, and I have been a student; we do not differ in the main point, but my mind has ripened more than his.

"You talk of brain transfusion, and placing one man's memory upon another man's shoulders. That same melancholy feeling must pass through the mind of every man who labours hard in acquiring knowledge; for, communicate what we can, and labour as assiduously as we may, how much must needs die with us? This reflection makes me sometimes regret (as far as is allowable) the time which I employ in doing what others might do as well, or what might as well be left undone. The Quarterly might go on without me, and should do so if I could go on without it. But what would become of my Portuguese acquirements and of yonder heap of materials, which none but myself can put in order, if I were to be removed by death?

"For the two voted monuments, I want one durable one, which should ultimately pay itself, — a pyramid not smaller than the largest in Egypt, the inside of which should serve London for Catacombs: some such provision is grievously wanted for so huge a capitol. God bless you!

R. S."

CHAPTER XXI.

CHANGES IN HIS POLITICAL OPINIONS. — CAUSES WHICH MADE HIM A POLITICAL WRITER. — HE IS REQUESTED TO GO TO LONDON TO CONFER WITH THE GOVERNMENT. — REASONS FOR DECLINING TO DO SO. — GLOOMY ANTICIPATIONS. — MEASURES NECESSARY FOR PREVENTING A REVOLUTION. — HE IS HATED BY THE RADICALS AND ANARCHISTS. — THOUGHTS CONCERNING HIS SON'S DEATH. — PLAN OF A WORK UPON THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY. — PROPOSED REFORMS. — EFFORT TO ASSIST HERBERT KNOWLES TO GO TO CAMBRIDGE. — LETTER FROM HIM. — HIS DEATH. — FEARS OF A REVOLUTION. — LITERARY EMPLOYMENT AND HOPES. — SYMPATHY WITH A FRIEND'S DIFFICULTIES. — MOTIVES FOR THANKFULNESS. — MELANCHOLY FEELINGS. — BLINDNESS OF MINISTERS. — 1816.

THE cessation of the war, as it put an end to some of the great public interests which had for so long a time filled my father's thoughts and imagination, so left him more free to brood over a new class of subjects, not less important in themselves, and pressing, if possible, still more closely upon his personal hopes and fears. He viewed with great alarm the internal condition of England, and the danger arising from anarchical principles among the poor. Upon this subject, as we have seen, he had already written in the Quarterly Review, and his letters to Mr. Rickman have shown in brief some of his reflections. I

conceive that no one who reads the records of his mind given in this work, can need be told that in all expressed opinions he was sincerity itself. That changes took place in his political views, no man was more ready to acknowledge; but they were not so many nor of such importance as has been fancied and pretended by his opponents. In his youth he was an abstract Republican, theoretically conceiving (I know not with what limitations) that men ought to be equal in government and rank, but practically caring very little for his own share in such things, leaving Government to take care of itself, and devoting himself almost entirely to other pursuits. It is plain, from the whole course of the letters of his early life, that political discussion made no part of his every-day existence; and it is more than probable, that had he not been impelled by necessity to employ himself in periodical writings, after his first feverish enthusiasm had passed away, he would have continued tranquilly employed in his poetical or historical labours, and have left the field of politics to busier and more ambitious spirits than himself.

At a period much earlier than that which we are now speaking of, he had contracted a gloomy misanthropical way of speaking, because circumstances had forced upon his unwilling mind the fact that human nature was not so good as he had fancied it,—that, in short, men in general were not qualified to be worthy members of his Republic. Like many other ardent spirits, he had been dreaming of a *Respublica Platonis*, and waking he had found himself in *fæce Romuli*. In a letter of January, 1814, he says,

"I was a Republican; I should be so still, if I thought we were advanced enough in civilisation for such a form of society." His whole habit of mind was changed in the progress from youth to middle age; but on many of the details of political questions which occupied his pen, he cannot be said to have undergone alteration, because they had not presented themselves at all to him during his youthful and enthusiastic state.

The thoughts which made him a political writer were roused wholly by a fear of revolution in England. This feeling was not an unnatural one. He was deeply impressed with the horrors of the French Revolution, and having contemplated the progress and operation in England of the same causes which had led to those horrors in France, he inferred that similar consequences must ensue at home, unless prompt measures were taken to avert them. He accordingly devoted himself to the task of using that power which he had obtained as a periodical writer for this object —a higher object could hardly be named—of exposing the evils in the social condition of the poor, — of rousing his countrymen to acknowledge them, — of patiently seeking out and suggesting, where practicable, the proper remedies. Among the first and foremost of which may be named, the general education of the lower classes based upon sound religious principles, of which he was one of the earliest and most active advocates.

As one of these evils which he wrote against was the incessant corrupting of men's minds by the revolutionary, the infidel, and the immoral part of

the press, he unavoidably stirred up a host of enemies. But the work itself upon which he was engaged, taken as a whole, places him in the front rank of those who have laboured for the benefit of mankind; and very many of the particular measures he laboured to bring about are now generally acknowledged to be undoubted improvements. In uttering his sentiments, he was then, as we see, a leader of men in power, instead of a follower; and in later days his services were amply acknowledged by men whose good opinion was praise indeed.

In the summer of this year (1816) a circumstance occurred, which showed he had not written wholly in vain, and which, had he been less scrupulous, he might doubtless have turned to good account as respected his worldly circumstances, whatever might have been the effect upon his present comfort or his permanent reputation.

It appears that some of his papers in the Quarterly Review had attracted the especial notice of the Ministry of that day, and a communication was privately made to him through various channels, and finally by Mr. Bedford, to the effect that Lord Liverpool wished to have an interview with him, for which purpose he was requested to go immediately to London.

This was certainly as high a compliment as could be paid to his powers as a political writer. He was, however, as the reader will see, too prudent hastily to catch at what most persons would have deemed a golden opportunity, and too independent to place himself unreservedly under the orders of the Govern-

ment. He was, indeed, ready enough, at any risk of unpopularity, to state the line of policy and the sort of measures he considered necessary at that time; but he preferred, like the bold Smith in "the Fair Maid of Perth," to "fight for his own hand;" and he took care not to afford the shadow of a foundation for those accusations which were often falsely brought against him, of "purchased principles and hireling advocacy."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Sept. 8. 1816.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"I have seldom taken up a pen with so little knowledge of what was to proceed from it as on this occasion; for after sleeping upon your letters, and thinking on them, and breakfasting upon them, I am at a loss how to reply or how to act. If it be necessary, I will certainly go to London. Do you, after what I may say, talk with Herries, and determine whether it be so. . . . .

"It is very obvious that a sense of danger has occasioned this step. Look at my first Paper upon the Poor in the 16th Quarterly; had the ministry opened their eyes four years ago, had they seen what was passing before their eyes, the evil might then have been checked. The events of a successful war would have enabled them to pursue a vigorous policy at home. It will be more difficult now, and requires more courage. And less is to be done by administering antidotes, than by preventing the dis-

tribution of the poison. Make by all means the utmost use of the press in directing the public opinion, but impose some curb upon its license, or all efforts will be in vain.

"In any way that may be thought desirable I will do my best; but alas, Grosvenor, what *can* I do that I have not been doing? A journal with the same object in view as the Anti-Jacobin, but conducted upon better principles, might be of service. I could contribute to it from a distance. But to *you* it must be obvious, that as my head and hands are not, like Kehama's, multipliable at pleasure, I can exert myself only in one place at a time, and Government would gain nothing by transferring me from the Quarterly to anything else which they might be willing to launch. It may be said that the Q. R. is established; that this engine is at work, and will go on, and that it is desirable to have more engines than one. I admit this. . . . In short, whatever ought to be done I am ready to do, and to do it fearlessly. The best thing seems to write a small book or large pamphlet upon the state of the nation.

"In all this I see nothing which would require a change of residence; that measure would induce a great sacrifice of feeling, of comfort, and of expense, and draw on a heavily increased expenditure. They would provide for this; but in what manner? A man is easily provided for who is in a profession, or is capable of holding any official character; this is not my case. . . . . .

"You will understand that I will hasten to London

if it be thought necessary, but that in my own calm judgment it is quite unnecessary, and I even believe that any conversation which the men in power might have with me would operate to my disadvantage. I should appear confused and visionary; an impracticable sort of man. On the whole, too, I do not think I *could* leave this country, where I am now in a manner attached to the soil by a sort of moral and intellectual serfage, which I could not break if I would, — and would not, if I could. And Edith is to be considered even more than myself.

"It is better that I should write either to you or Herries a letter to be shown, than that I should show myself. Good may undoubtedly be done by exposing the anarchists, and awakening the sound part of the country to a sense of their danger. This I can do; but it will be of no avail unless it be followed by effective measures. . . . . The immediate distress can best be alleviated by finding employment for the poor. . . . . I am very desirous that Mr. Owen's plan for employing paupers in agriculture should be tried: he writes like a madman, but his practice ought not to be confounded with his metaphysics; the experiment is worth trying. I do not doubt its success; and the consequences which he so foolishly anticipates will triumph should be regarded as the dreams of an enthusiast, not as reasons to deter Government from the most plausible means of abolishing the poor-rates which has been (or in my judgment can be) proposed. I have seen Owen, and talked with him at great length.

"God bless you!

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Sept. 9. 1816.

"My dear R.,

"About manufactures we shall not differ much, when we fully understand each other. I have no time now to explain; there are strangers coming to tea, and I seize the interval after dinner to say something relative to your prognostics, — a subject which lies as heavy at my heart as any public concerns can do, for I fully and entirely partake your fears.*

Four years ago I wrote in the Q. R. to explain the state of Jacobinism in the country, and with the hope of alarming the Government. At present they are alarmed; they want to oppose pen to pen, and I have just been desired to go up to town and confer with Lord Liverpool. God help them, and is it come to this! It is well that the press should be employed in their favour; but if they rely upon influencing public opinion by such means, it becomes us rather to look abroad where we may rest our heads in safety, or to make ready for taking leave of them at home.

* "I am in a bad state of mind, sorely disgusted at the prevalence of that mock humanity, which is now becoming the instrument of dissolving all authority, government, and, I apprehend, human society itself. Again we shall have to go through chaos and all its stages. It is of no use to think, or to try to act for the benefit of mankind, while this agreeable poison is in full operation, as at present. I retire hopeless into my nutshell till I am disturbed there, which will not be long if the humanity men prevail; the revolution will not, I expect, be less tremendous, or less mischievous than that of France — the mock humanity being only a mode of exalting the majesty of the people and putting all things into the power of the mob. I wish I may be wrong in my prognostics on this subject." — *J. R. to R. S., Sept.* 7. 1816.

"I wish to avoid a conference which will only sink me in Lord Liverpool's judgment: what there may be in me is not payable at sight; give me leisure and I feel my strength. So I shall write to Bedford (through whom, *viâ* Herries, the application has been made) such a letter as may be laid before him, and by this means I shall be able to state my opinion of the danger in broader terms than I could well do perhaps in conversation. The only remedy (if even that be not too late) is to check the press; and I offer myself to point out the necessity in a manner which may waken the sound part of the country from their sleep. My measures would be to make transportation the punishment for sedition, and to suspend the Habeas Corpus; and thus I would either have the anarchists under weigh for Botany Bay or in prison within a month after the meeting of Parliament. Irresolution will not do.

"I suppose they will set up a sort of Anti-Jacobin journal, and desire me to write upon the state of the nation before the session opens. If they would but act as I will write, — I mean as much in earnest and as fearlessly — the country would be saved, and I would stake my head upon the issue, which very possibly may be staked upon it without my consent.

"Of course no person knows of this application except my wife. By the time my letter (which will go to-morrow) can be answered, I shall be able to start for London, if it be still required. Most likely it will be. Meantime I should like to know your opinion of my views. They want you for their

adviser. They who tremble must inevitably be lost.

R. S."

To the Rev. James White.

"Keswick, Sept. 17. 1816.

"My dear James,

"Never, I entreat you, think it necessary to apologise for, or to explain any long interval of correspondence on your part, lest it should seem to require a like formality on mine, and make that be regarded in the irksome character of a debt, which is only valuable in proportion as it is voluntary. We have both of us business always to stand in our excuse, nor can any excuses ever be needed between you and me. I thank you for your letter and your inquiries. Time is passing on, and it does its healing work slowly, but will do it effectually at last. As much as I was sensible of the happiness which I possessed, so much must I unavoidably feel the change which the privation of that happiness produces. My hopes and prospects in life are all altered, and my spirits never again can be what they have been. But I have a living faith, I am resigned to what is (if I know my own heart, truly and perfectly resigned), thankful for what has been, and happy in the sure and certain hope of what will be, when this scene of probation shall be over.

"I shall be glad to receive your communications upon the distresses of the manufacturers; they might probably have been of great use had they reached

me when the last Quarterly was in the press. But I may, perhaps, still turn them to some account. There is another paper of mine upon the poor in the sixteenth number of the Quarterly, written when the Luddites, after their greatest outrages, seemed for a time to be quiet. In that paper I had recommended, as one means of employing hands that were out of work, the fitness of forming good footpaths along the road side, wherever the nature of the soil was not such as to render it unnecessary. This was (foolish enough) cut out by the editor; but when the great object is to discover means of employing willing industry, the hint might be of some service wherever it is applicable. In the way of palliating an evil of which the roots lie deeper than has yet, perhaps, been stated, your efforts should be directed towards finding employment, and making the small wages that can be afforded go as far as possible; the reports of the Bettering Society show what may be done by saving the poor from the exactions of petty shopkeepers; and as winter approaches great relief may be given, by obtaining through the London Association supplies of fish. Believe me, that person who should instruct the poor how to prepare cheap food in the most savoury manner would confer upon them a benefit of the greatest importance, both to their comfort, health, and habits; for comforts produce good habits, unless there be a strong predisposition to evil. I have much yet to say upon this subject, which may perhaps furnish matter for a third paper in the Review. Sooner or later I trust we shall get the national schools placed upon a na-

tional establishment; this measure I shall never cease to recommend till it be effected.

"I believe I have never congratulated you on your emancipation from mathematics, and on your ordination. This latter event has placed you in an active situation; you have duties enough to perform, and no man who performs his duty conscientiously can be unhappy. He may endure distress of mind as well as of body, but under any imaginable suffering he may look on to the end with hope and with joy.

Believe me, my dear James,

Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Sept. 11. 1816.

"My dear Bedford,

"Upon mature deliberation, I am clearly of opinion that it would be very imprudent and impolitic for me to receive anything in the nature of emolument from Government at this time, in any shape whatsoever. Such a circumstance would lessen the worth of my services (I mean it would render them less serviceable), for whatever might come from me would be received with suspicion, which no means would be spared to excite. As it concerns myself personally, this ought to be of some weight; but it is entitled infinitely to greater consideration if you reflect how greatly my influence (whatever it may be) over a good part of the public would be diminished, if I

were looked upon as a salaried writer. I must, therefore, in the most explicit and determined manner, decline all offers of this kind; but at the same time I repeat my offer to exert myself in any way that may be thought best. The whole fabric of social order* in this country is in great danger; the Revolution, should it be effected, will not be less bloody nor less ferocious than it was in France. It *will* be effected unless vigorous measures be taken to arrest its progress; and I have the strongest motives, both of duty and prudence, say even self-preservation, for standing forward to oppose it. Let me write upon the State of Affairs (the freer I am the better I shall write), and let there be a weekly journal established, where the villanies and misrepresentations of the Anarchists and Malignants may be detected and exposed. But all will be in vain unless there be some check given to the licentiousness of the press, by one or two convictions, and an adequate (that is to say) an effectual punishment.

"It would be superfluous to assure you that, in declining any immediate remuneration, I act from no false pride or false delicacy. Proof enough of this is, that at first I was willing to accept it. But I feel convinced that it would (however undeservedly) discredit me with the public. Every effort, even now, is making to discredit me, as if I had sold myself for the Laureateship. While I am as I am, these efforts recoil upon the enemy, and I even derive advantage

* What think you of a club of Atheists meeting twice a week at an ale-house in Keswick, and the landlady of their way of thinking?"—*To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq., Sept.* 11. 1816.

from them. Do not argue that I suffer them to injure me if I refuse what might be offered me for fear of their censures. It is not their censures; it is the loss of ostensible independence, however really independent I should be. At present, in defiance of all that malignity can effect, I have a weight of character, and the rascals fear me while they hate me.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Sept. 20. 1816.

"My dear R.,

"If I am again desired to come to London, it will be very foolish, after the letters I have written. They are to this purport, to express my full opinion upon the real state of things, and expose the actual danger in broad terms; to recommend, as the only means of averting it, that the batteries which are now playing in breach upon the Government, be silenced; in other words, that the punishment for sedition be made such as to prevent a repetition of the offence. . . . . I have endeavoured to make the necessity of these measures felt, and show that, for my own part, I cannot be better employed anywhere than here; and that if it be thought advisable that I should either covertly or openly give up some time to political writing, it would counteract, in great measure, the effect of anything, if I were to accept of anything in shape of office or augmented pension. This, therefore, I have decidedly

declined, but have offered to employ my pen zealously in recommendation and defence of vigorous measures. Should I therefore be again desired to visit London, my journey will pass as an ordinary occurrence, and nothing extraordinary will occur in it, except that I shall be introduced to some of the first officers of Government, instead of the second, to whom my acquaintance has hitherto been limited, and this may pass for a very natural occurrence. I can only repeat in conversation what I have already said in writing, and perhaps concur in arranging a journal, of which most certainly I will not undertake the management. That office is beneath me, and would require a sacrifice of character as well as time. The matter of danger is one which could not fail to present itself; and for that matter I know very well what I have at stake in the event of a Revolution, were the Hunts and Hazlitts to have the upper hand. There is no man whom the Whigs and the Anarchists hate more inveterately, because there is none whom they fear so much. Nothing that I could do could increase the good disposition towards me, and it would be folly to dream of abating it. If the Government will but act vigorously and promptly, all may yet be well; if they will not, I shall have no time to spare from my History of Brazil.

. . . . . .

"I heartily wish you were in an *efficient* situation. Everything may be done with foresight and intention; without them, everything must go to ruin.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Keswick, Oct. 2. 1816.

"My dear R.,

"I have received no further communication from Bedford, which is very well, as I must finish some few things, and rid my hands of them, before I set seriously to work in the good cause. Meantime the subject occupies my mind in all intervals of employment. . . . . I shall take a wide range; and I feel just now as if it were in my power to produce a work which, whatever might be its immediate effect, should be referred to hereafter as a faithful estimate of these times.

"Davy was here last week, and told me a valuable fact. A friend of his who, applying philosophical knowledge to practical purposes, has turned manufacturer at Clitheroe, went abroad immediately after the peace, not to seek for orders, but to examine with his own eyes the state of the manufacturers on the Continent. He returned with a conviction that it was necessary to draw in; reduced his produce in time, and in consequence is doing well, while his neighbours are breaking all around. Certain it is that manufactures depending upon machinery advanced very rapidly during the last war. No prohibition or penalties, however severe, *can* prevent machinery and workmen from finding their way abroad; to this we must make up our mind, and it is better that it should be so. A little time sets these things to rights.

"I incline to think there will come a time when public opinion will no more tolerate the extreme of poverty in a large class of the community, than it now tolerates slavery in Europe. Meantime it is perfectly clear that the more we can improve the condition of the lower classes, the greater number of customers we procure for the home market; and that if we can make people pay taxes instead of claiming poor-rates, the wealth as well as security of the State is increased. The poor-rates are a momentous subject, and I have long believed you were the only man who could grapple with it. I see, or think I see, palliatives and alteratives, in providing the labourers with garden and grass land, in establishing saving banks, in national education, and in affording all possible facilities and encouragement for emigration, and in colonising at home upon our waste lands.

"The state of the Church is another important question, assailed as it is on all sides. I think it would be possible to take in the Methodists as a sort of Cossacks, or certainly to employ those persons henceforward in aid of the Establishment, who, if not thus employed, will swell the numbers of the Methodists and act against it. There are no differences of doctrine in the way; it is but to let the licence come from the clergyman instead of the magistrate, to invent some such name as coadjutor for those who have a 'call;' let them catechise the children, *convert* the women, reclaim the reprobates, and meet on week days, or at extra hours on Sundays in the church, to expound or sing psalms;

a little condescension, a little pay, and a little flattery.

"By nature I am a poet, by deliberate choice an historian, and a political writer I know not how; by accident, or the course of events. Yet I think I can do something towards awakening the country, and that I can obtain the confidence of well-disposed minds by writing honestly and sincerely upon things in which all persons are concerned.

"Were I to accept a good berth, which is held out to me, it would very much counteract the impression which I am aiming to produce. Instead of attempting to answer my arguments and assertions, the anarchists would then become the assailants, and attack me as one who had sold himself.

"God bless you!

R. SOUTHEY."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Oct. 5. 1816.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"I have not looked with impatience for further news from you, because, whatever news you might have to send, I must needs finish a paper in time for the present number,—for the love of 100*l.* I have no intention of going to London unless there be a necessity for it. Application was made to me, some months ago, to revise a great book by Raffles upon the Island of Java before it goes to press;

I lent ear to it for the lucre of gain, but have heard nothing more. Had it come to anything it might have brought me to town in November; but if I could be as well employed, *quoad* money, at home (which seems likely), in other respects home employment would be better. I could wish myself independent of such considerations, if it were worth a wish as long as our necessities are supplied. It is my fate to have more claimants upon me than usually fall to the share of a man who has a family of his own; and if Tom's circumstances could be mended by a lift in his profession, it would be a relief to me as well as to him.

"That I shall make an appeal to the good sense of the country upon the existing state of things, and the prospect before us, is very likely, since my attention has been thus called to it. Indeed, if there be a probability of doing good, there seems little reason for any further stimulus, and the thing may be done certainly as well, and perhaps more becomingly, without any further intimation from the powers above. I incline at present to write anonymously, or under some fictitious name; for were the book to attract notice (and if it does not it will be useless), a mystery about the author would very much increase its sale. In that case a change of publishers would contribute to keep the secret; and, if I seek a new one, Nicoll would obviously be the man. In meditating upon this work I grow ambitious, and think of presenting such a view of things, as, whether it produce immediate benefit or not, may have a permanent value both for matter and composition.

"Pray inform me with the least possible delay whether, as P. L., I am exempt from serving parish offices, the people of Keswick having this day thrust honour upon me in the office of surveyor (what it means they best know); my appeal against the appointment must be made on the 12th of this month. Whatever the office be, I have neither knowledge, leisure, or inclination for it.

"Abuse does good, and of that I have plenty; but praise is more useful, and is not so liberally bestowed. I have seen a number of the Champion, in which my name stands for text to a sermon nothing relating to me; but at the conclusion it is said that the change in my opinions, as implied in my last writings, is that I recommend implicit submission; hence it should appear that the said Champion had not read those writings. Hunt and Hazlitt, I know, incessantly attack me; this barking makes a noise, and noise calls attention; so that as long as they have it not in their power to pass sentence upon me as a counter-revolutionist, such enmity is in its degree useful.

"The children, thank God, are well, and so am I as far as the husk is concerned; but the interior is as unlike what it was twelvemonths ago, as the darkest November day is unlike the bright sunshine of a genial May morning. And, whenever I relapse into recollections of what has been (and every hour brings with it something that calls up these thoughts), it is an effort to refrain from tears. I go about my business as usual, perform the ordinary functions of life, see company, go out visit-

ing, take Nash up the mountains, talk, reason, jest, but my *heart*, meanwhile, is haunted; and though, thank God, I neither undervalue the uses of this world, nor wish in any way to shrink from my part in it, I could be right willing to say *Valete*.

"This is too deep a strain. Give me my cap and bells! . . . . . .

"Can you send me some money? I am *pauper et inops*. The next number will float me. I have a thousand things to say to you if you were here; and have planned many expeditions into the vales and up the mountains when next you come. Remember me to all at home. God bless you!

R. SOUTHEY."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Keswick, Nov. 20. 1816.

"My dear R.,

". . . . . .

About the poor I am very anxious to be informed thoroughly, and very sensible how deficient I am in the right sort of knowledge on this subject; that is, how the great evil is to be remedied — that of the poor-rates. My present views can reach no further than to the slow alterations and preventives, of good instruction in youth and encouragement to frugality and industry afterwards by means of hope. Concerning immediate alleviations, I entirely agree with you in the great advantage of undertaking great public works, and stated it strongly some years ago

in the first paper about the poor, which is in some respects better than the last, and which, if it had wrought duly upon the men in power, would have prevented all danger now. The anarchists felt its force, and for that reason have been spitting their venom at me ever since. . . . . .

"My scheme is something of this kind; (but though I am always long even to dilatoriness in planning whatever I write, the plan is very much altered in the course of execution;) 1st. State in which the war has left us, political and moral. 2nd. Necessity of that war, and Bonaparte drawn to the life, as the Perfect Emperor of the English friends of freedom. 3rd. Sketch of the history of anarchical opinions in this country from Charles the First's time. Wilkes and Junius the root in modern times — the first fruit was the American war; the French revolution the second. This leads to, 4th. A view of the united reformers, *i. e.* the enemies of Government, under their several classes; their modes of operation; their various plans of reform, and the sure consequences of each.

. . . . . .

"All this will be well liked, and if I looked for favour it would be prudent to stop here; but it is not from any such motive that I put myself in the front of the battle. But here I wish to begin upon an exposure of the evils which exist in our state of society, and which it is the duty and interest of Government, as far as possible, to mitigate and remove. Some things should be got rid of as matters of scandal. To destroy influence in elections would be neither

wise if it were possible, nor possible if it were wise; but it is not fit that men should sell seats in parliament; though very fit that they should be bought. I would have these bought openly, like commissions in the army, and the money applied to form a fund for public works, either national or provincial: a scandal is got rid of and a good produced, and the species of property which would be touched by it is one which ought not to have existed, as having always been contrary to positive law. I think, too, that the few great sinecures which still exist should be given up, and applied during the lives of the present incumbents to some purposes of public splendour, that they may give them up with a grace. I would also give members to the great towns which have none, restricting the voters by such qualifications as should, as far as may be, disqualify the mere mob. I would lay no stress on these things, further than as depriving the anarchists of the only topics which give a shadow of plausibility to their harangues.

"The great evil is the state of the poor, which, with our press and our means of communication, constantly exposes us to the horrors of a *bellum servile*, and sooner or later, if not remedied, will end in one. . . .

"There are also great evils in the delays of law, which are surely capable of remedy, and in the expense of criminal law. . . . . A greater still in the condition of women; here we are upon your old ground: and passing from morals to religion, I think I could show how a great comprehension is practicable,—that is, how the Church might

employ those who would else be enlisted against her. And if there be a mode by which the tithes could be placed upon such a footing, or so commuted as to get rid of that perpetual cause of litigation, you are, of all men, most likely to point it out.

"One topic more, which is not introduced here in its proper place, may conclude this long outline. All professions, trades, and means of getting a livelihood among us are over-stocked. We must create a new layer of customers at home by bettering the condition of the lower classes, and giving them more wants, with more means of gratifying them. We must extend establishments instead of diminishing them,—more clergymen, more colleges, more courts of law; and lastly, we must colonise upon the true principle of colonisation, and cultivate every available acre at home. God bless you!

Yours very truly,

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Nov. 23. 1816.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"I want to raise 30*l.* a year for four years from this time, and for this purpose: —

"There is a lad at Richmond school (Yorkshire), by name Herbert Knowles, picked out from a humble situation for his genius (he has neither father nor mother), and sent to this school (a very excellent one) by Dr. Andrews, Dean of Canterbury, and a

clergyman, by name D'Oyle (so the name is written to me); if it should turn out to be D'Oyley, of the Bartlett's Buildings Society and the Quarterly, so much the better. From these and another clergyman he was promised 20*l.* a year, his relations promised 30*l.*, and Tate the schoolmaster, a good and an able man, gave him the run of his school (more he could not do, for this valid reason, that he has a wife and ten children); so his boarding, &c. were to be provided for. The plan was, that when qualified here, he was to go as a Sizar to St. John's; and this has been defeated by the inability of his relations to fulfil their engagements, owing to unforeseen circumstances, connected, I suppose, with the pressure of the times.

"In this state of things, Herbert Knowles, God help him, thought the sure way to help himself was to publish a poem. Accordingly, he writes one, and introduces himself by letter to me, requesting leave to dedicate it to my worship, if, upon perusal, I think it worthy, and so forth. Of course I represented to him the folly of such a scheme, but the poem is brimful of power and of promise. I have written to his master, and received the highest possible character of him both as to disposition and conduct; and now I want to secure for him that trifling assistance, which may put him in the right path, and give him at least a fair chance of rendering the talents, with which God has endowed him, useful to himself and beneficial to others.

"Of the 30*l.* which are wanting for the purpose, I will give 10*l.*, and it is not for want of will that I do

not supply the whole. Perhaps if you were to mention the circumstance to —— and to ——, it might not be necessary to go farther. He must remain where he is till October next, and by that time will be qualified for St. John's. God bless you!

R. S."

It does not appear that Mr. Bedford's applications were successful, and my father then applied to Mr. Rogers, with whose willingness to give assistance to struggling genius he was well acquainted, and who promptly and most kindly expressed his pleasure at this opportunity being afforded him, and also conveyed the promise of the third portion of the sum required from Lord Spencer, whose guest he chanced to be at the time my father's letter reached him. All difficulties now seemed removed, and the tidings were gladly communicated by my father to Herbert Knowles, whose grateful and sensible reply will, I think, not be deemed misplaced here.

Herbert Knowles to R. Southey, Esq.

"Gomersal, near Leeds, Dec. 28. 1816.

"My dear Sir,

"I have duly received your two last letters, both of which have filled me with pleasure and gratitude, not so much for the solid advantage which your kindness affords and has obtained for me, as for the tender

manifestation which it gives me of your concern for my welfare.

"And now, my dear Sir, I will freely state to you my feelings and my sentiments at the present hour. Upon reading the Life of Kirke White, I was struck with surprise at the distinguished success which he met with at the University; and from his inordinate anxiety and immoderate exertions* to obtain it, I was insensibly led into the opinion, not that his success at college was considered as a *sine quâ non* for the benevolence of his patrons, but that that benevolence was given under the impression, and accompanied with the expectation, that he would make a corresponding

* I extract here the melancholy record of some of these exertions. "During his first term, one of the university scholarships became vacant; and Henry, young as he was in college, and almost self-taught, was advised by those who were best able to estimate his chance of success to offer himself as a competitor for it. He passed the whole term in preparing himself for this; reading for college subjects in bed, in his walks, or, as he says, where, when, and how he could; never having a moment to spare, and often going to his tutor without having read at all. His strength sunk under this; and though he had declared himself a candidate, he was compelled to decline: but this was not the only misfortune. The general college examination came on; he was utterly unprepared to meet it, and believed that a failure here would have ruined his prospects for ever. He had only about a fortnight to read what other men had been the whole term reading. Once more he exerted himself beyond what his shattered health could bear; the disorder returned; and he went to his tutor, Mr. Catton, with tears in his eyes, and told him that he could not go into the hall to be examined. Mr. Catton, however, thought his success here of so much importance, that he exhorted him, with all possible earnestness, to hold out the six days of the examination. Strong medicines were given him to enable him to support it, and he was pronounced the first man of his year. But life was the price which he was to pay for such honours as this; and Henry is not the first young man to whom such honours have proved fatal. He said to his most intimate friend, almost the last time he saw him, that were he to paint a picture of Fame, crowning a distinguished undergraduate after the senate-house examination, he would represent her as concealing a death's head under a mask of beauty." — *Remains of H. K. White*, vol. i. p. 46.

compensation in the credit reflected upon them from his distinction at college.

"I will not deceive. If I thought the bounty of my friends was offered under the same impression, I would immediately decline it. Far be it from me to foster expectations which I feel I cannot gratify. My constitution is not able to bear half the exertion under which Kirke White sunk; double those exertions would be insufficient to obtain before October next his attainments, or insure his success at St. John's. Two years ago I came to Richmond, totally ignorant of classical and mathematical literature. Out of that time, during three months and two long vacations, I have made but a retrograde course; during the remaining part of the time, having nothing to look forward to, I had nothing to exert myself for, and wrapped in visionary thought, and immersed in cares and sorrows peculiarly my own, I was diverted from the regular pursuit of those qualifications which are requisite for University distinction. . . . . I need not say much more. If I enter into competition for University honours, I shall kill myself. Could I twine (to gratify my friends) a Laurel with the Cypress, I would not repine; but to sacrifice the little inward peace which the wreck of passion has left behind, and relinquish every hope of future excellence and future usefulness in one wild and *unavailing* pursuit, were indeed a madman's act, and worthy of a madman's fate.

"Yet will I not be idle; but as far as health and strength allow, I will strive that my passage through the University, if not splendid, shall be respectable;

and if it reflect no extraordinary credit on my benefactors, it will, I trust, incur them no disgrace.

. . . . . .

"I am at a loss to convey to you the high sense I feel of your proffered kindness, and that of your friends. The common professions of gratitude all can use, and extraordinary ones are unnecessary. Suffice it, then, to say, *I thank you from my heart;* let time and my future conduct tell the rest.

"I know not how I should act with respect to Lord Spencer and Mr. Rogers. Will you direct me? Should I write to them? If so, will you give me their respective addresses? . . . . . With the highest esteem for your character, profound veneration for your talents, and the warmest gratitude for your kindness, I have the honour to be,

My dear Sir,

Affectionately yours,

HERBERT KNOWLES."

Alas! as in the case of Kirke White and young Dusautoy, the fair promise which high principle, talent, and good sense combined, seemed to hold forth, was blighted in the bud, and not two months from the date of this letter, Herbert Knowles was laid in his early grave. Too truly had he prognosticated that his feeble body and ardent mind could not have borne the requirements of hard study, for the mere excitement of his improved and now hopeful prospects, seems to have hastened the close of a life which, we might suppose, under no circumstances, could have been a long one.

His kind friend, Mr. Tate, communicated the event to my father; and after speaking of him with the greatest affection, and saying that all that the kind attention of friends and medical skill could do, had been done, he adds, "But with ardour and genius, encouraged by the most flattering patronage, the stamina of his constitution could not support the anxious energies of such a mind; and before we were well aware of the danger that impended, the lamp was consumed by the fire which burned in it. . . . . . Poor Herbert had in prospect commenced his academical career. He died grateful to all his friends, and had longed for recovery the more earnestly, that he might redeem his unwilling silence by the expression of his gratitude."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq., M. P.

"Keswick, Dec. 7. 1816.

"My dear Wynn,

". . . . . .

Is there not something monstrous in taking such a subject as the Plague in a Great City?* Surely it is out-Germanising the Germans. It is like bringing racks, wheels, and pincers upon the stage to excite pathos. No doubt but a very pathetic tragedy might be written upon "the Chamber of the Amputation," cutting for the stone, or the Cæsarean operation; but actual and tangible horrors do not belong to poetry.

* This allusion is to Wilson's "City of the Plague."

We do not exhibit George Barnwell upon the ladder to affect the gallery now, as was originally done; and the best picture of Apollo flaying Marsyas, or of the Martyrdom of St. Bartholomew would be regarded as more disgusting than one of a slaughter-house or of a dissecting-room.

"What news to-morrow may bring of Monday's riots, God knows, — the loss of some lives, I expect; and this I am sure of, that if Government refrain much longer from exerting those means which are intrusted to it for the preservation of public security, the alternative will be, ere long, between revolution and a military system.

"Dec. 8. 1816.

"I am more sorry than surprised to see so many sailors in the mob. It has always been the custom to disband as many men as possible at the conclusion of a war, but there has been often a great cruelty in this; and in the present instance a great and glaring impolicy. The immediate cause of that distress which was felt in the beginning of the year, was an enormous diminution of the national expenditure; the war, a customer of fifty millions, being taken out of the market, and consequently a great number of hands put out of employ. Now surely to spend less, and turn off more hands, is only an Irish way of remedying this.

"You, who know how much my thoughts have been led towards the subject, will not be surprised to hear that I am writing Observations upon the Moral and Political State of England. What I have

at different times written in the Quarterly has sometimes been mutilated, and was always written under a certain degree of restraint to prevent mutilation. But I have heard of these things from many quarters, and seen that where the author was not suspected they have produced an impression. And I am disposed to think it not unlikely that I may do some present good, and almost certain that if the hope be disappointed for the present, it must sooner or later take effect. There is plenty of zeal in the country, and abundance of good intentions, which, if they were well directed, might be of infinite service. There are great and sore evils which may certainly be alleviated, if not removed; and there are dangers which we ought to look fairly in the face. I have nothing to hope or fear for myself, and the sole personal consideration that can influence me is the desire of acquitting myself at least of the sin of omission. Better that a candle should be blown out than that it should be placed under a bushel. Whether I am ripe in judgment must be for others to determine; this I know, that I am grown old at heart. I bore up under the freshness of my loss with surprising strength, and still carry a serene front; but it has changed me more than years of bodily disease could have done; and time enough has now elapsed to show how very little it will ever effect in restoring my former nature. It is a relief and a comfort to employ myself usefully, or at least in endeavouring to be useful. God bless you, my dear Wynn!

Yours most affectionately,

R. S."

To John May, Esq.

"Keswick, Jan. 1. 1817.

"My dear Friend,

"Your last letter gave me great and most unexpected concern. I had indeed believed that you were sailing on a quiet sea, in no danger of shoals or tempests. By what principle, or what strange want of principle, is it that mercantile men so often, for the sake of the shortest reprieve from bankruptcy, involve their nearest friends and connexions with them? I write to you in a frame of mind which you will easily conceive, looking back upon the year which has just closed, and reflecting on the trials with which we have both been visited during its course. Your loss, I would fain hope, may not prove altogether so great as you apprehend; and I would hope also that some prize in the lottery of life, full of change as it is, may one day or other replace it. Even at the worst it leaves you heart-whole. It will be long before I shall find myself so; and if life had no duties, I should be very far from desiring its continuance for the sake of any enjoyments which it can possibly have in store. I have the same sort of feeling that a man who is fondly attached to his family has when absent from them,—as if I were on a journey. I yearn, perhaps more than I ought to do, to be at home and at rest. Yet what abundant cause have I for thankfulness, possessing as I do so many blessings, that I should think no man could possibly be happier, if I had not been so much happier myself. Do not think

that I give way to such feelings; far less that I encourage them, or am weak enough to repine. What is lost in possession is given me in hope. I am now in my forty-third year: both my parents died in their fiftieth. Should my lease be continued to that term, there is a fair prospect of leaving my family well provided for; and let it fall when it may, a decent provision is secured. Before this object was attained, great natural cheerfulness saved me from any anxiety on this score, and there happily exists no cause for anxiety when I have no longer the same preservative. My house is in order, and whenever the summons may come I am ready to depart. Dearly as I love these children, my presence is by no means so necessary as it was to him who is gone. He drew in his intellectual life from me, and a large portion of mine is departed with him. It is best as it is, for he is gone in the perfection of his nature, and mine will not be the worse for the chastening which it has undergone. Hitherto the lapse of time only makes me feel the depth of the wound. It will not be always thus. A few years (if they are in store for me) will alter the nature of my regret. I shall then be sensible how different a being Herbert, were he living, would be from the Herbert whom I have lost, and the voices and circumstances which now so forcibly recall him, will have lost their power. Too much of this. But holidays are mournful days to persons in our situation, and the strong forefeeling which I have always experienced of such possibilities, has always made me dislike the observance of particular days. Your god-daughter is the only child

whose birthday I have not contrived to forget, and hers has been remembered from the accident of its being May-day. . . . . .

"God bless you, my dear Friend!

Yours most affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Jan. 4. 1817.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"The Courier of to-night tells me I am elected member of the Royal Institute of Amsterdam; now I put it to your feelings, Mr. Bedford, whether it be fitting that a man upon whom honour is thus thrust, should be without a decent pair of pantaloons to receive it in; such, however, is my condition; and unless you can prevail upon the Grand Hyde to send me some new clothes without delay, I shall very shortly become a *sans culottes*, however unwilling Minerva may be. Moreover, I have promised to pay a visit at Netherhall * toward the end of this month, and I must therefore supplicate for the said clothes *in formâ pauperis*.

"The packet wherein this will be enclosed carries up the conclusion of a rousing paper for Gifford, which, with some omissions and some insertions, will be shaped into the two first chapters of my book. It will not surprise me if in some parts it should

* The seat of his friend Humphrey Senhouse, Esq.

startle Gifford. Are the Government besotted in security? or are they rendered absolutely helpless by fear, like a fascinated bird, that they suffer things to go on? Are they so stupid as not to know that their throats as well as their places are at stake? As for accelerating my movements for the sake of holding a conversation which would end in nothing, though I have little prudence to ballast my sails, I have enough to prevent me from that. All that I possibly can do I am doing, under a secret apprehension that it is more likely to bring personal danger upon myself than to rouse them to exertion; but for that no matter: it is proper that the attempt should be made; the country will stand by them if they will stand by the country.

"Were I to see one of these personages, and he were to propose anything specific, it would probably be some scheme of conducting a journal *à la mode* the Anti-Jacobin. This is no work for me. They may find men who will like it, and are fitter for it.

"I think of being in town in April, *si possum*. My book, peradventure, may be ready by that time; but there is a large field before me, and many weighty subjects. Meantime, though I want nothing for myself, and certainly would not at this time accept of anything, I should nevertheless be very glad if they would remember that I have a brother in the navy. God bless you!

R. S."

CHAPTER XXII.

SURREPTITIOUS PUBLICATION OF WAT TYLER. — CONSEQUENT PROCEEDINGS. — IS ATTACKED IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BY WILLIAM SMITH. — OFFER OF A LUCRATIVE APPOINTMENT CONNECTED WITH THE TIMES NEWSPAPER. — TOUR IN SWITZERLAND. — LETTERS FROM THENCE. — ACCOUNT OF PESTALOZZI. — OF FELLENBERG. — IMPRESSIONS OF THE ENGLISH LAKES ON HIS RETURN. — HIGH OPINION OF NEVILLE WHITE. — NORFOLK SCENERY. — SPECULATIONS ON ANOTHER LIFE. — LIFE OF WESLEY IN PROGRESS. — CURIOUS NEWS FROM THE NORTH POLE. — LINES ON THE DEATH OF THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE. — CURE FOR THE BITE OF SNAKES. — 1817.

My father's acceptance of the office of Poet-Laureate, together with his writings in the Quarterly Review, had drawn down upon him no small measure of hostility from that party whose opinions assimilated to those he had formerly held. Acknowledged by friends and foes to be a powerful writer, and by his own admission apt to express himself bitterly upon subjects of moral and political importance, they could not endure that he who in early youth had advocated Republican principles, should have outgrown and outlived them, and now, in the maturity of his judgment, bring his active mind and busy pen to the strenuous support of existing institutions.

It seems, indeed, that high as party-spirit often runs now, it boiled up in those days with a far fiercer

current. The preceding quarter of a century had been one of continued excitement, — commenced by the French revolution, kept up by the long war, and more recently renewed by its glorious termination. A large party in the country seemed imbued with what, to speak tenderly, must be called an un-English spirit: they would have been glad if their prognostications of Bonaparte's invincibility had been realised. "The wish was father to the thought;" and it can hardly be supposed they would have grieved if the imperial eagle had been planted a second time upon the shores of Britain.

Such was Hazlitt, whom even Mr. Justice Talfourd's kindly pen describes as "staggering under the blow of Waterloo,"* and as "hardly able to forgive the valour of the conquerors." Such my father's friend, William Taylor of Norwich, who calls it "a victory justly admired, but not in its tendency and consequences satisfactory to a cosmopolite philosophy;" and says that "Liberty, toleration, and art have rather reason to bewail than to rejoice" at the presence "of trophies oppressive to the interests of mankind."†

Neither is it difficult to imagine with what views such persons must have regarded all those questions upon which my father's pen was most frequently employed; and to many of them his writings were peculiarly obnoxious, both as reminding them unpleasantly that "they had spoken a lying divination," and also as boldly enunciating those principles which

* Final Memorials of Charles Lamb, vol. ii. p. 130.
† Memoirs of William Taylor of Norwich, vol. ii. p. 461.

they were endeavouring with heart and soul to undermine and destroy.

Moved, doubtless, by some feelings of the kind, an attempt was now made by certain persons (and eagerly taken up by others) to annoy and injure him, which need only to be related to characterise itself, without requiring the use of strong language on my part, — an attempt, the chief effect of which was to increase his notoriety more than any other event in his whole life.

It appears that in the summer of 1794, when in his twenty-first year, he had thrown off, in a moment of fiery democracy, a dramatic sketch, entitled Wat Tyler, in which, as might be expected from the subject, the most levelling sentiments were put into the mouths of the *dramatis personæ*.

The MS. of this production was taken up to town by his brother-in-law, Mr. Lovel, and placed in a bookseller's hands, Ridgeway by name; and my father happening to go up to town shortly afterwards, called upon this person, then in Newgate, and he and a Mr. Symonds agreed to publish it anonymously. There was also present in Ridgeway's apartment a dissenting minister, by name Winterbottom.

It seems, however, that this intention was quickly laid aside, for no proofs were ever sent to my father; and "acquiescing readily in their cooler opinion," he made no inquiries concerning the poem, and took so little thought about it, as not even to reclaim the MS.; indeed, the whole circumstance, even at the time, occupied so little of his thoughts, that I have not been able to find the slightest allusion to it in his

early letters*, numerous, and wholly unreserved in expression, as have been those which have passed through my hands.

In the spring of this year (1817), to my father's utter astonishment, was advertised as just published, Wat Tyler, by Robert Southey; the time having been seized for doing so, when the opinions it contained could be most strongly contrasted with those the writer then held and advocated, and when the popular feeling† was exactly in that state in which such opinions were likely to be productive of the greatest mischief.

The first step taken in the matter, with the advice of his friends, was to reclaim his property, and to

* In one of the reviews of the first volume of this work, it is remarked (naturally enough) as strange, that Wat Tyler is not mentioned in the account of his Oxford life, when it was written. My reason for the omission was, that there being no mention of it in the papers or letters relating to that period, its history seemed properly to belong to the time of its surreptitious publication; especially, as had it not been so published, its very existence would never have been known.

† As a proof how well the movers in this business had calculated both the mischief the publication, at such a time, was likely to do, and the annoyance it would probably give my father, I may quote the following letter, in which a playbill of Wat Tyler was enclosed: —

To Robert Southey, Esq., Poet-Laureate and Pensioner of Great Britain.

"Whittington, July 11. 1817.

"Sir,

"Your truly patriotic and enlightened poem of *Wat Tyler* was last night presented to a most respectable and crowded audience here, with cordial applause; nor was there a soul in the theatre but as cordially lamented the sudden deterioration of your principles, intellectual and moral, whatever might have been the cause thereof.

Yours,
JACK STRAW."

apply for an injunction against the publisher. The circumstances connected with this, and the manner in which the application was defeated, will be found in the following letters.

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Feb. 15. 1817

"My dear G.,

"Do you remember that twenty years ago a letter, directed for me at your house, was carried to a paper-hanger of my name in Bedford Street, and the man found me out, and put his card into my hand? Upon the strength of this acquaintance, I have now a letter from this poor namesake, soliciting charity, and describing himself and his family as in the very depth of human misery. This is not the only proof I have had of a strange opinion that I am overflowing with riches. Poor wretched man, what can I do for him! However, I do not like to shut my ears and my heart to a tale of this kind. Send him, I pray you, a two-pound note in my name, to No. 10. Hercules Buildings, Lambeth; your servant had better take it, for fear he should have been sent to the workhouse before this time. When I come to town, I will seek about if anything can be done for him.

"I wrote to Wynn last night to consult him about Wat Tyler, telling him all the circumstances, and desiring him, if it be best to procure an injunction, to send the letter to Turner, and desire him to act for me. Three-and-twenty years ago the MS. was

put into Ridgeway's hands, who promised to publish it then (anonymously, unless I am very much mistaken), and from that time to this I never heard of it. There was no other copy in existence except the original scrawl, which is now lying upstairs in an old trunk full of papers. I wish the Attorney-General would prosecute the publisher for sedition; this I really should enjoy. Happy are they who have no worse sins of their youth to rise in judgment against them.

"Government are acting like themselves. Could I say anything more severe? They should have begun with vigour and rigour; and then, when they had the victory, have made their sacrifices *ex proprio motu*, with a good grace. But they ought not, on any account, to have touched the official salaries,—a thing unjust and unwise, which, instead of currying favour for them with the rabble, will make them despised for their pusillanimity. I have neither pity nor patience for them. Was ever paper used like this last article has been to please them! They have absolutely cut it down to their own exact measure; everything useful is gone, and everything original; whatever had most force in it was sure to be struck out. Of all the practical measures upon which I touched, one only has escaped, and that because it comes in as if by accident,—the hint about transporting for sedition. If we come out of this confusion without an utter overthrow, it will be as we escaped the gunpowder plot,—not by any aid of human wisdom, and God knows we have no right to calculate upon miracles. The prospect is very dismal;

and it is provoking to think that nothing is wanting to secure us but foresight and courage; but of what use is railing, or advising, or taking thought for such things? I am only a passenger; the officers must look to the ship; if she is lost, the fault rests with them. I have nothing to answer for, and must take my share in the wreck with patience.

"Murray offers me a thousand guineas for my intended poem in blank verse, and begs it may not be a line longer than Thomson's Seasons!! I rather think the poem will be a post-obit, and in that case twice that sum, at least, may be demanded for it. What his real feelings towards me may be, I cannot tell; but he is a happy fellow, living in the light of his own glory. The Review is the greatest of all works, and it is all his own creation; he prints 10,000, and fifty times ten thousand read its contents, in the East and in the West. Joy be with him and his journal.

"It is really amusing to see how the rascals attack me about the Court, as if I were a regular courtier, punctual in attendance, perfect in flattery, and enjoying all that favour, for the slightest portion of which these very rascals would sell their souls, if they had any. Malice never aimed at a less vulnerable mark.

"God bless you!

R. S.

"Longman has just sent me the Resurrection of Sedition. The verses are better than I expected to find them, which I think you will allow to be a cool philosophical remark."

To Messrs. Longman and Co.

"Keswick, Feb. 15. 1817.

"Dear Sirs,

"There is, unluckily, a very sufficient reason for not disclaiming Wat Tyler, — which is, that I wrote it three-and-twenty years ago.

"It was the work, or rather the sport, of a week in the summer of 1794: poor Lovel took it to London, and put it into Ridgeway's hands, who was then in Newgate. Some weeks afterwards I went to London and saw Ridgeway about it; Symonds was with him, and they agreed to publish it: (I believe, or rather I am *sure*, the publication was to have been anonymous), and what remuneration I was to have was left to themselves, as dependent upon the sale. This was the substance of our conversation; for nothing but words passed between us. From that time till the present, I never heard of the work: they of course, upon better judgment, thought it better left alone; and I, with the carelessness of a man who has never thought of consequences, made no inquiry for the manuscript. How it has got to the press, or by whose means, I know not.

"The motive for publication is sufficiently plain. But the editor, whoever he may be, has very much mistaken his man. In those times and at that age, and in the circumstances wherein I was placed, it was just as natural that I should be a Republican, and as proper, as that now, with the same feelings, the same principles and the same integrity, when

three-and-twenty years have added so much to the experience of mankind, as well as matured my own individual intellect, I should think revolution the greatest of all calamities, and believe that the best way of ameliorating the condition of the people is through the established institutions of the country.

"The booksellers must be disreputable men, or they would not have published a work under such circumstances. I just feel sufficient anger to wish that they may be prosecuted for sedition.

"I would write to Turner, if my table were not at this time covered with letters; perhaps if you see him you will ask his opinion upon the matter, — whether it be better to interfere, or let it take its course.

Yours very truly,
R. SOUTHEY."

To C. H. Townshend, Esq.

"Keswick, Feb. 16. 1817.

"My dear Chauncey,

"If there be any evil connected with poetry, it is that it tends to make us too little masters of ourselves, and counteracts that stoicism, or necessary habit of self-control, of which all of us must sometimes stand in need. I do not mean as to our actions, for there is no danger that a man of good principles should ever feel his inclination and his duty altogether at variance. But as to our feelings. You talk of mourning the loss of your trees, and not

enduring to walk where you were wont to see them. I can understand this, and I remember when I was little more than your age saying that

> 'He who does not sometimes wake
> And weep at midnight, is an instrument
> Of Nature's common work;'

but the less of this the better. We stand in need of all that fortitude can do for us in this changeful world; and the tears are running down my cheeks when I tell you so.

"Thomas Clarkson I know well: his book upon Quakerism keeps out of sight all the darker parts of the picture; their littleness of mind, their incorrigible bigotry, and their more than popish interference with the freedom of private actions. Have you read his history of the Abolition of the Slave Trade? I have *heard* it from his own lips, and never was a more interesting story than that of his personal feelings and exertions. I have happened in the course of my life to know three men, each wholly possessed with a single object of paramount importance,—Clarkson, Dr. Bell, and Owen of Lanark, whom I have only lately known. Such men are not only eminently useful, but eminently happy also; they live in an atmosphere of their own, which must be more like that of the third heaven than of this every-day earth upon which we toil and moil.

"I am very ill-pleased with public proceedings. The present Ministry are deficient in every thing except good intentions; and their opponents are deficient in that also. These resignations ought to have been made during the pressure of war, uncalled

for, when they would have purchased popularity. They come now like miserable concessions forced from cowardice, and reap nothing but contempt and insult for their reward. Nor ought they at any time to have resigned part of their *official* appointments, because the appointments of office are in every instance inadequate to its expenses, in the higher departments of state. They should take money from the sinking fund, and employ it upon public works, or *lend* it for private ones, stimulating individual industry by assisting it with capital, and thus finding work for idle hands, and food for necessitous families. From the same funds they should purchase waste lands, and enable speculators and industrious poor to *colonise* them; the property of the lands remaining in the nation, as a source of certain revenue, improving in proportion to the prosperity of the country.

"God bless you!

Your affectionate friend,

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Feb. 19. 1817.

"My dear Grosvenor.

"This poor wretched paper-hanger* has sent me another letter, because I did not reply to his first. Men are too prone to take offence at importunity, finding anger a less uncomfortable emotion than pity; this indeed it is; and for that reason I scold

* See p. 238.

my wife and my children when they hurt themselves. As to this unhappy man, I hope you have sent him the two pounds; it will do him very little good, but it is really as much as I can afford to give him for the sake of the name, and a great deal more than I ever got by it.

"The tide seems to be turning, and if Government will but check the press they would soon right themselves. In this part of the country I hear that travellers (the bagmen) collect their money more easily than on their last rounds, and receive more orders. A fellow was selling Cobbett's twopenny Register and other such things at Rydal the other day; he was, or appeared to be, a sailor, and his story was that he was going to Whitehaven, and a gentleman had given him these to support himself on the road by selling them.

"In grief and in uneasiness I have often caught myself examining my own sensations, as if the intellectual part could separate itself from that in which the affections predominate, and stand aloof and contemplate it as a surgeon does the sufferings of a patient during an operation. This I have observed in the severest sorrows that have ever befallen me, but it in no degree lessens the suffering. And whenever I may have any serious malady, this habit, do what I may to subdue it, will tend materially to impede or prevent recovery. But in petty vexations it has its use. I was more vexed than I ought to have been about this publication of Wat Tyler; for though I shook off the first thoughts, or rather immediately began to consider it in the right point of view as a thing utterly unimportant; still there was an un-

easiness working like yeast in my abdomen, and my sleep was disturbed by it for two nights; by that time it had spent itself, and I should now think nothing more about it if it were not necessary to determine how to act. Wynn will find the thing more full of fire and brimstone perhaps than he imagines; and yet, perhaps, the wiser way will be not to notice it, but let it pass as a squib. Indeed, I could laugh about it with any person who was disposed to laugh with me. I shall hear from him again to-morrow, and probably shall receive a letter from Turner by the same post. Turner has a cool clear head; I have very little doubt that they will coincide in their opinion, and be it what it may, I shall act accordingly. God bless you!

R. S."

To Sharon Turner, Esq.

"Keswick, Feb. 24. 1817.

"My dear Turner,

"My brother has written to dissuade me strongly from proceeding in this business. My own opinion is, that if I do not act now the men who have published the work will compel me to do so at last, by inserting my name in such a manner as to render the measure unavoidable. Indeed it was inserted as a paragraph in the Chronicle, which I suppose they paid for as an advertisment. Therefore I think it best to take the short and open course, believing that

in most cases such courses are the best. However, I have sent Harry's letter to Wynn, and, if his arguments convince him, have desired him to let you know. This was done yesterday, and if you have not heard from him before this reaches you, it may be concluded that he thinks it best to proceed. I suppose there can be no doubt of obtaining the injunction. The statement is perfectly accurate; I know not whether it be of any use to let you know that at the time the transaction took place I was under age. I was just twenty when the poem was written, and saw these booksellers about four months afterwards.

"I fully assent to what you say concerning political discussions, and intermeddle with them no farther than as they are connected not only with the future good, but as appears to me with the immediate safety of society. It is not for any men, or set of men, that I am interested; nor for any particular measures. But with regard to the fearful aspect of these times, you may perhaps have traced the ground of my apprehensions in Espriella, in the Edinburgh Register, and in the Quarterly, more especially in a paper upon the Poor about four years ago. It is now come to this question, — Can we educate the people in moral and religious habits, and better the condition of the poor, so as to secure ourselves from a mob-revolution; or has this duty been neglected so long, that the punishment will overtake us before this only remediable means can take effect? The papers which I shall write upon the real evils of society will, I hope, work for posterity, and not be

wholly forgotten by it; they proceed from a sense of duty, and that duty discharged, I shall gladly retire into other ages, and give all my studies to the past and all my hopes to the future.

"My spirits, rather than my disposition, have undergone a great change. They used to be exuberant beyond those of almost every other person; my heart seemed to possess a perpetual fountain of hilarity; no circumstances of study, or atmosphere, or solitude affected it; and the ordinary vexations and cares of life, even when they showered upon me, fell off like hail from a pent-house. That spring is dried up; I cannot now preserve an appearance of serenity at all times without an effort, and no prospect in this world delights me except that of the next. My heart and my hopes are there.

"I have a scheme to throw out somewhere for taking the Methodists into the Church; or borrowing from Methodism so much of it as is good, and thereby regenerating the Establishment. There is little hope in such schemes, except that in process of time they may produce some effect. But were it effected now, and would the Church accept the volunteer services of lay coadjutors, I should feel strongly inclined to volunteer mine. This is a dream, and I fear the whole fabric will fall to pieces even in our days.

Believe me,

Yours with affection and esteem,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To the Rev. Herbert Hill.

"Keswick, Feb. 28. 1817.

"My dear Uncle,

"Your copies of Brazil are, I hope, by this time delivered at the Doctor's, and in a day or two I shall send the third volume to the press; for if I should only get through a single chapter before my journey, it will be so much gained. My movements will be upon a wide scale. I purpose to start for London the second week in April, and, if you are then in Hampshire, to run down to you for a week, as soon as I have rested myself, and shaken hands with Bedford and Rickman; and on May-day, or as soon after as my companions can be ready, I start with Senhouse, of Netherhall, and my former *compagnon de voyage*, Nash, for the continent. From six weeks to two months is to be the length of our furlough, during which we mean to get as far as Lago Maggiore and Milan, back over the Alps a second time, and seeing as much as we can of Switzerland, to return by way of the Rhine, and reach home as early as possible in July.

"I learn from to-day's Courier that Brougham attacked me in the House of Commons. I hope this affair will give no friend of mine any more vexation than it does me. Immediately upon seeing the book advertised, I wrote to Wynn and to Turner, giving them the whole facts, and proposing to obtain an injunction in Chancery. How they will determine I do not yet know. Perhaps, as Brougham has thus

given full publicity to the thing, they may not think it advisable to proceed, but let it rest, considering it, as it really is, of no importance. Men of this stamp, who live in the perpetual fever of faction, are as little capable of disturbing my tranquillity as they are of understanding it.

"I have just finished the notes and preface to the Morte d'Arthur, a thing well paid for. For the next Quarterly, I have to review Mariner's Tonga Islands (including a good word for our friend the Captain*), and to write upon the Report of the Secret Committees; but I shall fly from the text, and, saying as little as may be upon the present, examine what are the causes which make men discontented in this country, and what the means which may tend to heal this foul gangrene in the body politic. Never was any paper so emasculated as my last; and yet it was impossible to resent it, for it was done in compassion to the weakness, the embarrassment, and the fears of the Ministry. They express themselves much indebted to me. In reply to their intimations of a desire to show their sense of this, I have pressed a wish that Tom be remembered when there is a promotion in the navy. For myself, I want nothing, nor would I, indeed, accept anything. They give me credit for a reasonable share of foresight, and perhaps wish that my advice had been taken four years ago.

"God bless you!

R. S."

* Captain, afterwards admiral, Burney, who published a collection of voyages in the South Seas.

It was now decided, upon the advice of his legal friends, that application should be made to the Court of Chancery * for an injunction to restrain the publication of Wat Tyler. This was done, but without success, upon the singular ground that as the work was calculated to do an injury to society, the author could not reclaim his property in it. This, which would seem a just decision in the case of the *piracy* of an immoral, blasphemous, or seditious work, applies very differently in the case of a publication, set forth without the consent or knowledge of the author, and apparently gives liberty to any scoundrel to plunder a man's writing-desk, and send forth to the public any chance squibs he may have thrown off in an idle hour for the amusement of his friends.

These fellows must have reaped a rich harvest by their roguery, 60,000 copies being said to have been sold at the time.

* The following was Lord Eldon's judgment upon this case: — "I have looked into all the affidavits and have read the book itself. The bill goes the length of stating that the work was composed by Mr. Southey in the year 1794; that it is his own production, and that it has been published by the defendants without his sanction or authority; and, therefore, seeking an account of the profits which have arisen from, and an injunction to restrain, the publication. I have examined the cases that I have been able to meet with containing precedents for injunctions of this nature, and I find that they all proceed upon the ground of a title to the property in the plaintiff. On this head a distinction has been taken to which a considerable weight of authority attaches, supported as it is by the opinion of Lord Chief Justice Eyre; who has expressly laid it down, that a person cannot recover in damages for a work which is in its nature calculated to do an injury to the public. Upon the same principle this court refused an injunction in the case of Walcot (Peter Pindar) v. Walker, inasmuch as he could not have recovered damages in an action. After the fullest consideration, I remain of the same opinion as that which I entertained in deciding the cases referred to. Taking all the circumstances into my consideration, it appears to me that I cannot grant this injunction until after Mr. Southey shall have established his right to the property by action." Injunction refused.

To the Editor of the Courier.

"In Courier, March 17. 1817.

"Sir,

"Allow me a place in your columns for my 'last words' concerning Wat Tyler.

"In the year 1794, this manuscript was placed by a friend of mine (long since deceased) in Mr. Ridgeway's hands. Being shortly afterwards in London myself for a few days, I called on Mr. Ridgeway, in Newgate, and he and Mr. Symonds agreed to publish it. I understood that they had changed their intention, because no proof sheet was sent me, and acquiescing readily in their cooler opinion, made no inquiry concerning it. More than two years elapsed before I revisited London; and then, if I had thought of the manuscript, it would have appeared a thing of too little consequence to take the trouble of claiming it for the mere purpose of throwing it behind the fire. That it might be published surreptitiously at any future time, was a wickedness of which I never dreamt.

"To these facts I have made oath. Mr. Winterbottom, a dissenting minister, has sworn, on the contrary, that Messrs. Ridgeway and Symonds having declined the publication, it was undertaken by himself and Daniel Isaac Eaton; that I *gave* them the copy as their own property, and gave them, moreover, a fraternal embrace, in gratitude for their gracious acceptance of it; and that he the said Winterbottom verily believed he had a right *now*,

after an interval of three-and-twenty years, to publish it as his own.

"My recollection is perfectly distinct, notwithstanding the lapse of time; and it was likely to be so, as I was never, on any other occasion, within the walls of Newgate. The work had been delivered to Mr. Ridgeway; it was for him that I inquired, and into his apartments I was shown. There I saw Mr. Symonds, and there I saw Mr. Winterbottom also, whom I knew to be a dissenting minister. *I never saw Daniel Isaac Eaton in my life;* and as for the story of the embrace, every person who knows my disposition and manners, will at once perceive it to be an impudent falsehood. Two other persons came into the room while I was there; the name of the one was Lloyd, — I believe he had been an officer in the army; that of the other was Barrow. I remembered him a bishop's boy at Westminster. I left the room with an assurance that Messrs. Ridgeway and Symonds were to be the publishers; in what way Winterbottom might be connected with them, I neither knew nor cared, and *Eaton I never saw.* There is no earthly balance in which oaths can be weighed against each other; but character is something in the scale; and it is perfectly in character that the man who has published Wat Tyler under the present circumstances, should swear — as Mr. Winterbottom has sworn.

"Thus much concerning the facts. As to the work itself, I am desirous that my feelings should neither be misrepresented nor misunderstood. It contains the statement of opinions which I have long

outgrown, and which are stated more broadly because of this dramatic form. Were there a sentiment or an expression which bordered upon irreligion or impurity, I should look upon it with shame and contrition; but I can feel neither for opinions of universal equality, taken up as they were conscientiously in early youth, acted upon in disregard of all worldly considerations, and left behind me in the same straightforward course as I advanced in years. The piece was written when such opinions, or rather such hopes and fears, were confined to a very small number of the educated classes; when those who were deemed Republicans were exposed to personal danger from the populace; and when a spirit of anti-Jacobinism prevailed, which I cannot characterise better than by saying that it was as blind and as intolerant as the Jacobinism of the present day. The times have changed. Had it been published surreptitiously under any other political circumstances, I should have suffered it to take its course, in full confidence that it would do no harm, and would be speedily forgotten as it deserved. The present state of things, which is such as to make it doubtful whether the publisher be not as much actuated by public mischief as by private malignity, rendered it my duty to appeal for justice, and stop the circulation of what no man had a right to publish. And this I did, not as one ashamed and penitent for having expressed crude opinions and warm feelings in his youth (feelings right in themselves, and wrong only in their direction), but as a man whose life has been such that it may set slander at defiance, and who is unremit-

tingly endeavouring to deserve well of his country and of mankind.

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

A letter addressed by Mr. Foster to Mr. Cottle, and published by him in his Reminiscences of Coleridge and Southey *, rather involves the matter in more difficulty than explains it.

"I wonder if Mr. Southey ever did get at the secret history of that affair. The story, as I heard it, was that Southey visited Winterbottom in prison, and, just as a token of kindness, gave him the MS. of Wat Tyler. It was no fault of Winterbottom that it was published. On a visit to some friends at Worcester he had the piece with him, meaning, I suppose, to afford them a little amusement at Southey's expense, he being held in great reproach and even contempt as a turn-coat. At the house where Winterbottom was visiting, two persons, keeping the piece in their reach at bed-time, sat up all night transcribing it, of course giving him no hint of the manœuvre. This information I had from one of the two operators."

My father distinctly states he did not *give* the MS. to anybody, and that he did not put it into Winterbottom's hands *at all*. But even if it had been so, how came Winterbottom to appear in court and justify the publication upon oath if the circumstances were as Mr. Foster relates?

It might have been supposed that with the pro-

* P. 235.

ceedings before the Lord Chancellor, the matter would have ended; that the surreptitious publication of the crude and hasty production of a youth of twenty, long since forgotten by the writer, would hardly have been deemed worthy the attention of the public, especially as he had never concealed or suppressed his former opinions, which stood plainly on record in his early published works.

But the opportunity was too tempting to be lost, and the subject was twice brought forward in Parliament,—once by Mr. Brougham, the second time by William Smith, the member for Norwich, who, arming himself for the occasion with Wat Tyler in one pocket and the Quarterly Review in the other, stood forth in the House of Commons to contrast their contents.

In reply to this attack*, which was answered at the time by Mr. Wynn, my father published a letter to William Smith, defending himself against the charges brought against him, and stating his past and present opinions, and his views as to the condition of the country and the measures most likely to promote the welfare of the community. This letter, with the remarks that called it forth, will be found at the end of this volume, where I think it right to place it, as, from my father's reprinting it in his Essays, it appears plainly that he intended it should be preserved, and as the history of Wat Tyler is incomplete without it.

* Mr. Wilberforce wrote to my father at this time, saying he could not feel satisfied until he had informed him that he was not in the House of Commons when William Smith brought the subject forward, or his voice would also have been heard in his defence.

To Humphrey Senhouse, Esq.

"Keswick, March 22. 1817.

"My dear Senhouse,

"You see I am flourishing in the newspapers as much as Joanna Southcote did before her expected accouchement. And I have not flourished in Chancery* because a Presbyterian parson has made oath that I gave the MSS. to him and to another person whom I never saw in my life. There is no standing against perjury, and therefore it is useless to pursue the affair into a court of law. I have addressed two brief letters to William Smith in the Courier; and there the matter will end on my part, unless he replies to them. In the second of those letters you will see the history of Wat Tyler, as far as it was needful to state it. There was no occasion for stating that about a year after it was written I thought of making a serious historical drama upon the same subject, which would have been on the side of the mob in its main feelings, but in a very different way; and, indeed, under the same circumstances, I should have brained a tax-gatherer just as he did. The *refaccimento* proceeded only some fifty or three score lines, of which I only remember this short passage; part of it having been transplanted into Madoc. Some one has been saying, *a plague on time!* in reference to Tyler's gloomy state of mind, to which he replies —

* My father seems to have mistaken the grounds of the Chancellor's decision. Probably he had only been informed of the result, and had not seen the judgment.

> 'Gently on man doth gentle Nature lay
> The weight of years; and even when over laden
> He little likes to lay the burden down.
> A plague on care, I say, that makes the heart
> Grow old before its time.'

"Had it been continued, it might have stood beside Joan of Arc, and perhaps I should have become a dramatic writer. But Joan of Arc left me no time for it then, and it was dismissed, as I supposed, for ever from my thoughts. I hear that in consequence of this affair, and of the effect which that paper in the Quarterly produced, Murray has printed two thousand additional copies of the number. And yet the paper has been dismally mutilated of its best passages and of some essential parts. I shall have a second part in the next number to follow up the blow.

"My fear is that when commerce recovers, as it presently will, Government should suppose that the danger is over; and think that the disease is removed because the fit is past. There are some excellent remarks in Coleridge's second lay sermon upon the over-balance of the commercial spirit, that greediness of gain among all ranks to which I have more than once alluded in the Quarterly. If Coleridge could but learn how to deliver his opinions in a way to make them read, and to separate that which would be profitable for all, from that which scarcely half a dozen men in England can understand (I certainly am not one of the number), he would be the most useful man of the age, as I verily believe him in acquirements and in powers of mind to be very far the greatest.

Yours very truly,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

In the minds of many men who were not disposed to slander my father, nor to entertain hostile feelings towards him, there yet remained an impression that he attacked with intemperate language, the same class of opinions which he himself had once held. The next letter shows us how he defended himself against this imputation, when represented to him by Mr. Wynn.

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq., M.P.

"Keswick, April 13. 1817.

"My dear Wynn,

"Do you not see that the charge of my speaking acrimoniously against persons for thinking as I once thought is ridiculously false? Against whom are the strong expressions used, to which you refer in the Quarterly Review and the Registers. Against the rank Bonapartists, with whom I had never any more resemblance than I have with the worshippers of the devil in Africa; and against those who, without actually favouring him as Whitbread did, nevertheless thought it hopeless to make our stand against him on the ground where we had every possible advantage? And as for the Jacobin writers of the day, — in what have I ever resembled them? Did I ever address myself to the base and malignant feelings of the rabble? and season falsehood and sedition with slander and impiety? It is perfectly true that I thought the party who uniformly predicted

our failure in Spain to be ignorant *, and pusillanimous, and presumptuous, — surely, surely, their own words, which are given in the Register, prove them to have been so. Can you have forgotten in 1809-10, how those persons who thought with me that there was reasonable ground for hope and perseverance were insulted as idiots, and laughed to scorn? For my own part, I never doubted of success; and proud I am that the reasons upon which my confidence was founded were recorded at the time. Had you been in power you would have thought otherwise than as you did, because you would have known more of the state of Europe. Arms were sent from this country to Prussia as early as the autumn of 1811. Believe me, the terms in which I have spoken of the peace party are milk and water compared to what I have seen among the papers with which I have been intrusted. But enough of this.

"If you saw me now you would not think otherwise of my temper under affliction than you did in the summer. I have never in the slightest degree yielded to grief, but my spirits have not recovered, nor do I think they ever will recover, their elasticity. The world is no longer the same to me. You cannot conceive the change in my occupations and enjoyments: no person who had not seen what my ways of life were *can* conceive how they were linked with his life. But be assured that I look habitually for comfort where it is to be found.

* "The paper in the Quarterly Review is directed against the Edinburgh Reviewer, whose words are quoted to justify the epithets." — *R. S.*

"God bless you! I shall be in town on the 24th, at my brother's, and leave it on the 1st of May.

Yours affectionately,

R. S."

An incident that occurred in the midst of the Wat Tyler controversy must now be noticed, as one which, had my father thought fit to take advantage of it, would have changed the whole current of his life, and which offered him the most favourable prospects of pecuniary advantage of any which presented themselves, either in earlier or later life.

This was a proposal made privately through the medium of his friend Mr. Henry Crabbe Robinson; and in the first instance, the simple question was asked, whether "if an offer were made him to superintend a lucrative literary establishment, in which he would have — if he desired it — a property, of which the emolument would be very considerable, and which would give him extensive influence over the whole kingdom, he were in a condition to accept it;" or rather, whether be was willing to listen to the details of such a proposal. "But," it was added, "if he was so attached to his delightful residence, and to that kind of literary employment which alone gives fame, and must in its exercise be the most delightful, an immediate answer to that effect was requested."

My father had no doubt from whom the proposal came and to what it referred, being aware of his friend's intimacy with Mr. Walter, the pro-

prietor of the Times; but so completely was he wedded to his present mode of life, so foreign to his habits would this sort of occupation have been, combined with a residence in London, and so much more strongly was his mind set upon future and lasting fame than upon present profit, that he did not even request to be informed of the particulars of the offer; but at once declined it, upon the plea that no emolument, however great, would induce him to give up a country life, and those pursuits in literature to which the studies of so many years had been directed. "Indeed," he adds, "I should consider that portion of my time which is given up to temporary politics grievously misspent, if the interests at stake were less important." *

The situation alluded to was that of writing the chief leading article in the Times, together, I suppose, with some general authority over the whole paper; and the remuneration which it was intended to offer was 2000*l.* a-year, with such a share in the profits as would have enabled him to realise an independence in a comparatively short time.

In a former letter my father speaks of an intention of making a tour of the Continent in the course of the spring. His habits of laborious study rendered some perfect relaxation absolutely necessary, and travelling abroad was the only way in which he could obtain it. At home he *could not* be unemployed; he had no tastes or pursuits of any kind to lead him from his books, and any journey he might

* R. S. to H. C. R., March 13. 1817.

take in his own country was only a series of hurried movements from one friend to another. Of London, the reader need not be told, he had not merely a dislike, but absolutely a "horror;" and thus his mind was hardly ever completely unbent except on the few occasions when he could afford himself a foreign excursion.

From such a change (which at this time was particularly needful to him) no one ever derived more benefit or more pleasure. With his travelling garments he put on totally new habits, and set out with the determination to make the most of all pleasures and the least of all inconveniences, being thus as good-humoured and as accommodating a "compagnon de voyage" as it was possible to conceive. His journal on this occasion (like all his other journals) is elaborately minute, and shows how perseveringly he must have laboured at it in spite of fatigue. Every circumstance is detailed; in every place he seems to find objects of interest which would altogether escape the eye of an ordinary traveller. Indeed, the industry of his pen, the activity of his mind, and the quickness of his perceptive faculties, are nowhere so plainly shown as in these records of his foreign journeys.

Every spare moment of his time being thus occupied, his letters during this journey contain little more than the outlines of his route; a few of them, however, will not be thought out of place here.

To Mrs. Southey.

"Neufchatel, Wednesday, May 28. 1817.

"My dear Edith,

"Yesterday we entered Switzerland, and reached this place after a week's journey from Paris without let, hindrance, accident, or inconvenience of any kind.

"It is with the greatest difficulty that I find time to keep a journal. We rise at five, and have travelled from ten to twelve hours every day, going about twenty miles before breakfast. Hunger would hardly permit us to do anything in the way of writing before dinner, if there were not always something to see while dinner is preparing; and after dinner it requires an effort of heroic virtue to resist the pleasures of wine and conversation, and it becomes almost impossible upon taking the pen in hand to resist sleep. This morning we lay in bed till seven, that we might have the full enjoyment of a whole holiday. I remember at Westminster the chief gratification which a whole holiday on a Sunday afforded, was that of lying abed till breakfast was ready at nine o'clock.

"Our windows are within a stone's throw of the Lake, and we see the Alps across it. The Lake is like a sea in its colour, its waves, and its voice, of which we are of course within hearing. The Alps, of which we have the whole extent in view, cannot be less than fifty miles distant in the nearest point, directly across the Lake, and Mont Blanc, which is at the extremity on the right, about fourscore. If

our horizon at Keswick were wide enough, I could sometimes show you the Alps in the clouds. They have precisely the appearance of white cumulated clouds, at the verge of the sky, resting upon the earth, and silvered with sunshine; and from such clouds they are only to be distinguished by their definite outline and permanent forms. It is idle to compare this country with our own; or rather it would be worse than idle to form any comparison for the purpose of depreciating either. Part of our yesterday's journey * was so like Cumberland, that I could fancy myself within an hour's walk of home; and this forced upon me such a sense of time and distance, and separation, that the tears were more than once ready to break loose. The mountains through which we passed from Pontarlier to this place rise behind the town, and in that direction the view as to its natural objects might be English. A huge harbour, or, still better, an arm of the sea, with such a sky as I have described, will give you a full idea of the rest.

"We hear dismal stories of famine and distress; but the scene continually recedes as we approach it, nor have we seen any indication of it whatever. From all that I can collect, the bad harvest of last year has acted here as it does in England, and must everywhere; it presses severely upon that class of persons who stood in need of economy before, and who, with economy, had a little to spare for others. There are plenty of beggars throughout France, and

* Across the Jura.

much squalid misery; but the children of the peasantry are as hale, and apparently as well fed, as far as all appearances of flesh and blood may be trusted, as those in our own country. What I have seen of France, about five hundred miles, from Calais to Pontarlier, is, on the whole, less interesting than an equal distance in Great Britain would appear to a foreign traveller; I mean that he would meet with a country more generally beautiful, finer parts, and better towns. But there have been very fine parts upon this journey, with a character and beauty of their own. In Switzerland every step must be interesting, and go in what direction you will it is impossible to go wrong.

"Nothing surprised me more in France than that there should be no middle-aged women among the peasantry; they appear to pass at once from youth to hagged old age, and it is no exaggeration to say that they look like so many living and moving mummies. Fond as they are of finery in youth (for they are then tricked out in all the colours of the rainbow), in old age their dress is as wretched and squalid as their appearance. I see nothing among them of the gaiety of which we have heard so much in former times. Not a single party have we seen dancing throughout the whole journey. The weather, indeed, has been unusually cold, but certainly not such as would check the propensities of a light-heeled generation, if they ever were as fond of a dance as their light-hearted progenitors. I must say, to their credit, that we have uniformly met with civility; not the slightest insult or incivility of any kind has been

offered to us; and if some extortion has been practised generally at the hotels, it is no more than what is done everywhere, and perhaps more in England than anywhere else.

"God bless you! Give my love to all.

Your affectionate husband,

R. S."

To Mrs. Southey.

"Turin, Wednesday, June 11. 1817.

"My dear Edith,

"I wrote to you on this day fortnight from Neufchatel, since which time all has gone well with us, and we have travelled over very interesting ground. Half a day brought us to Yverdun, where the other half was passed for the sake of seeing Pestalozzi.* The

* "The castle is a huge, plain, square building, with few windows, and a round tower at each corner with an extinguisher top. This has been assigned to Pestalozzi; and having taken up our quarters at the Maison Rouge, forth we sallied to pay our respects to this celebrated personage.

"We ascended the steps and got into the court; the first person whom we accosted was a boy, who proved to be a young Philistine, and replied with a petition for petite charité; just then we got sight of one of the scholars, and at his summons Pestalozzi himself came out to us. I have seen many strange figures in my time, but never a stranger than was now presented to our view: a man whose face and stray tusk-like teeth would mark him for fourscore, if his hair, more black than gray, did not belie the wrinkles of his countenance; this hair a perfect glib in full undress, no hat or covering for the head, no neckcloth, the shirt collar open, a pair of coarse dark trousers, and a coat, if coat it may be called, of the same material, which Hyde would as little allow to be cloth as he would the habilement to be 'a coat at all.' He speaks French nearly as ill as I do, and much less intelligibly, because his speech is rapid and impassioned, and moreover much affected by the loss of his teeth. I introduced myself as a friend of Dr. Bell, who had read M. Julien's book,

next day to Lausanne, where for the mere beauty of the place we staid a day. Tuesday to Geneva, seeing

and the American work upon his system, but was desirous of obtaining a clearer insight into it. In his gesticulations to welcome us he slipt into a deep hole, and might very easily have met with a serious hurt. He led me into a small school-room, hung round with vile portraits of some favourite pupils, apparently works of the school; his own bust was there, strikingly like him, but large enough for Goliath, he himself being rather below the middle size. There happened to be a display of fencing; where the *beau monde* of Yverdun were at this time assembled, and the military band giving them tunes between the acts. Here his tutors were gone, and many of his boys, but in the evening, he said, he hoped to show us practically the system which he now explained: the sum of his explanation was, that true education consists in properly developing the talents and faculties of the individual. It was not likely that so metaphysical a head should think more of Dr. Bell than Dr. Bell, in his practical wisdom, thinks of such metaphysics. I mentioned Owen of Lanark, and the Essay upon the Formation of Character, and presently perceived that I had touched the right string. We parted till the evening. A large party were dining at the hotel, as if it were a club or public meeting, which, however, the waiter said was not the case: but there was unusual business in the house; perhaps many persons had come from the country round to see the fencing. We walked about the town, and saw the view which it commands.

"We met Pestalozzi in a walk without the town; he had dressed himself, and was in a black coat, but still without a hat, and he was arm-in-arm with a figure more extraordinary than his own; a man some twenty-five or thirty years of age, dressed in a short and neat slate-coloured jacket and trousers trimmed with black, his bonnet of the same materials and colour; and his countenance so full, so fixed, so strongly and dismally charactered, that a painter might select him for one of the first disciples of St. Francis or of Loyola. In the course of our walk we went behind the castle into a large open garden, and there we saw some of the pupils employed in developing their bodily powers: a pole, about eighteen feet high, was securely fixed in an inclined position against a ladder; the boys ascended the ladder and slid down the pole; others were swinging in such attitudes as they liked from a gallows. About six, P. called upon us to show us the practice of his system; it was exhibited by two very intelligent teachers as applied to drawing and arithmetic. In drawing, they were made to draw the simplest forms, and were not instructed in the laws of perspective till the eye and hand had acquired correctness; just as we learn to speak by habit before we know the rules of grammar. In arithmetic, it appeared to me that the questions served only to quicken the intellect, but were of no utility in themselves, and acted upon boys just as the disputes of the schoolmen formerly acted

Fernay on the way. Wednesday we halted to see this famous, most ugly, most odd, and most striking city, compared to which Lisbon is a city of sweet savours. Friday to Aix, — *that* Aix where the adventure of King Charlemagne and the Archbishop happened: Pasquier (in whom I found the story) mistakes it for Aix-la-Chapelle. There is a lake here, and a magnificent one it is. N. and S. both made sketches of it before breakfast on Friday. We reached Les Echelles that night, and Saturday visited the Chartreuse: this was a horse expedition, and a whole day's work; but we were most amply rewarded for the heat and fatigue which we endured. I am fully disposed to believe, with Wordsworth, that there is nothing finer in Switzerland than this. The place took us two stages out of our way, which we had to retrace on Sunday; they happened to be remarkably interesting ones, having the mountain pass of the Echelles in one, with a tunnel through the mountain, and by the road in the other the most glorious waterfall I ever beheld. That evening we entered the Savoy Alps at Aiguebelle and slept at La Grande Maison, a sort of large Estalagem in the midst of

upon men. A son of Akerman's, in the Strand, was one of the boys, and said he was much happier than at an English school. His cousin of the same name, a German by birth, is one of the teachers; he had been in England, where he knew Wordsworth, and he studied under Mr. Johnson at the Central School, and he had travelled in Switzerland with Dr. Bell. He also was very curious concerning Owen; with him I had much conversation, and was much pleased with him. M. Julien also was introduced to us; author of those books which I bought at Aix-la-Chapelle. We wrote our names at parting, and although Mr. P. knew no more of mine than he did of Tom Long the carrier's, he was evidently gratified by our visit, and we parted good friends, with all good wishes." — *From his Journal.*

Borrowdale scenery upon a large scale. Nash made a view from the window. I do not stop to describe things because my journal will do all this. Monday we continued our way up the valley, following the course, or rather ascending the river Arco; such a river! the colour of my coat precisely, which though Mr. Hyde admits it to be a very genteel mixture as well calculated to hide the dust, is a very bad colour for a river; but for force and fury, it exceeds anything that I had ever before seen or imagined: we followed it as far as Lans le Bourg, a little town at the foot of Mount Cenis, and itself as high above the sea as the top of Skiddaw. Yesterday (Tuesday) we crossed Mount Cenis, descended into the plain of Piedmont, and, after the longest of all our days' journeys in point of time, reached Turin just as it grew dark.

"From Besançon to this place it has been one succession of fine scenery, yet with such variety that every day has surprised us. Fine weather began on the 1st of June, and here in Italy we have found a great difference of climate. On the other side the Alps, the cherries are not larger than green peas; here they are ripe. Currants, oranges, and Alpine strawberries are in the markets, and apricots, which are perfectly worthless.

"Our journey has been in all respects pleasant, and I shall find the full advantage of it in the knowledge which it has given me, and the new images with which it has stored my memory. Of the Alps, I will only say here that they make me love Skiddaw better than ever, and that Skiddaw will outlast them;

at least, will outlast all that we have yet seen, for they are falling to pieces. The wreck and ruin which they display in many places are hardly to be described.

"We are burnt like gipsies, especially Senhouse. 'All friends round Skiddaw' has been our daily toast; and we drank it in all kinds and qualities of wine. As for news, we know not how the world goes on, and have ceased to think about it. The only thing for which we are anxious is to get letters from home, and this we shall do when we get to Mr. Awdry's. If I could but know that all was well!

"God bless you! Good night, my own dear Edith.

R. S."

To John May, Esq.

"Brussels, Aug. 1. 1817.

"My dear Friend,

"I wrote you a long letter* from Geneva, on our way to Italy, and since that time I have written twice to London; so that I conclude you would hear by roundabout means that I had reached Milan, and afterwards, that we had safely returned into Switzerland. From Geneva we made for Mont Cenis, and turned aside from Chamberry to visit the Grande Chartreuse, which, after all that we have since seen,

* This seems to have been a letter of elaborate description. It never reached its destination, having been destroyed by the person to whom it was given to put into the post, for the sake of appropriating the postage money!

remains impressed upon our minds as one of the finest imaginable scenes. . . . . At Milan I purchased some books. Thence to Como, where I found Landor, and we remained three days. Bellaggio, twenty miles from Como, upon the fork of the lake, is the finest single spot I have ever seen, commanding three distant lake views, each of the grandest character. Lugano was our next stage, and somewhere here it is, that if climate and scenery alone were to be consulted, I should like to pitch my tent; perhaps at Laveno upon the Lago Maggiore. The Isola Bella, upon that lake, is of all extravagant follies the most absurd. Having crossed the lake, we entered upon the Simplon road, which, on the whole, I do not think so fine as the passage of Mont Cenis. But it is foolish to compare things which are in so many respects essentially different. In the Maurienne, and indeed when you begin to descend into Piedmont, the world seems tumbling to pieces about your ears, of such perishable materials are the mountains made. In the Simplon, you have generally rocks of granite. A glorious Alpine descent brought us into the Valais, which, even more than the Maurienne, is the land of goitres and cretins, both more numerous and more shocking to behold than I could have believed possible. At Martigny, we halted and crossed to Chamouny by the Tête Noir. In the album at the Montanvert, I found John Coleridge's adventures in going to the Garden, as it is called: unluckily the ink with which he wrote has made them in part illegible.

"We returned by the Tête Noir as we came,

the Col de Balme being still covered in great part with snow; and proceeding by Vevay and Lausanne, returned to Mr. Awdry's, at Echichens, where we rested three days. Just four weeks had elapsed since we left that place, and it was a high enjoyment to find ourselves again among friends. . . . . Proceeding to Berne*, we sent our carriage to Zurich,

* The following account of Fellenberg's Institution at Hofwyl near Berne, may interest the reader: — "Immediately after breakfast we drove to the noted spot. Fellenberg was not within when I delivered Sir T. Acland's letter and the book with which he had entrusted me; a messenger was despatched to seek him, and a young man meanwhile carried us over the institution, and to a warehouse full of agricultural machines and instruments made upon new principles, many of them so exceedingly complicated that it seemed as if the object had been how to attain the end desired by the most complex means; to the smiths, the blacksmiths, &c. &c.; we also visited the dairy, which was really a fine one, being so contrived that in hot weather half the floor is covered with cold water, and in time of severe frost with hot; the granaries, &c., and the place of gymnastics, where the boys are taught to climb ropes, and walk upon round poles. About an hour had been passed in this manner when F. returned. His countenance is highly intelligent; his light eyes uncommonly clear and keen; his manners those of a man of the world, not of an enthusiast. He entered into a long detail, rather of his own history than of his system. He had been the only member of the Council, he said, who, at the first invasion, proposed vigorous resistance, so as to make all Switzerland à la Vendée: they talked of shooting him, &c. Afterwards, some of the Swiss directory who knew him, and whom he knew to be desirous of doing the best they could for their country under such calamitous circumstances, induced him, as he was at Paris on private business, to remain there as secretary to the embassy, and serve Switzerland as well as he could against her own ambassador and the French government. This, I think, was intended as an apology for his political life. His object, he said, was, in the first place, to fulfil his duty as father of a family, and as a citizen. He wished to restore the moral character of Switzerland; to raise her again to her former respectable state; and to make her the means of rendering services to Europe which other powers might receive from her without jealousy. This part of his plan turned out to be a wild scheme of instituting a seminary for those who were destined by birth to hold offices; princes, peers, and statesmen: they were to be educated so as to know and love each other: the purest Christianity was to be practically taught; and his institution was then to co-operate with the

and struck into the Oberland, where we travelled ten days by land and water, on horseback or on foot, sometimes in cars, and sometimes in carts. The snow rendered it impossible to cross the Grimsel without more risk than it would have been justifiable to in-

Christian Alliance, which was the favourite scheme of the Emperor Alexander and the Emperor of Austria. This part of his institution, though very high prices were paid by the individuals, did not support itself, the expense of masters being so great. The agronomic part afforded funds, from the farm (which appeared in beautiful order) and the manufacture of agricultural implements upon his improvements, the demand for them being great. All that we had seen were about to be sent off to those who had bespoken them. About 200 workmen are employed; a third part assisted in the education of poor destitute children,—there were only about thirty; these amply supported themselves by the employments in which they were trained. The aristocracy of Berne discouraged him; treated him as a visionary, and even forbade the circulation of those books which expounded his views; I should not be able to get them anywhere in Switzerland, only at Geneva: so he gave me the collection. As for the seminary for statesmen, I cannot but suspect there is more of humbug than of enthusiasm in it. F. neither looks nor talks like a man who can suppose himself destined to found a school like the philosophers of old. If he has any enthusiasm it is respecting agriculture, which he spoke of as the means of developing moral virtues. And he was proud of his inventions, and evidently hurt that the Board of Agriculture had not acknowledged the receipt of some which he had presented to them, and not published the result of experiments made with them. He had also made experiments of great importance upon the nature of different soils, as to their property of retaining heat and moisture. Of Dr. Bell he was disposed to speak slightingly, saying he was an enthusiast and an excellent schoolmaster, but unfit for a director. Upon this point I told him of Madras; he thought that the Doctor pushed the principle of emulation too far, and used means for encouraging a spirit which is in itself but too prevalent. On this point he spoke in a manner which in some measure accorded with my own judgment.

"Kosciuzko's name was in the book of visitors. He requested me at my leisure to give him some account of the best works which had been published in England during the French Revolution, that he might send for them for his library; for though he did not speak our language he understood it, and was desirous that our literature should be cultivated on the continent. He had about 250 acres in cultivation, and inspected his labourers from a tower with a telescope; because, as one of his people said, he cannot be in all places at the same time."

cur. We slept on the Righi. At Zurich a day's halt was necessary for the love of the washerwoman. We then set off homeward in good earnest, through the Black Forest. . . . . We then made for Frankfort and Mentz, and down the left bank of the Rhine to Cologne, where we saw the three kings, and a very considerable number of the eleven thousand virgins — certainly some thousands of them — a sight more curious than any of its kind in Portugal or Spain. Here we arrived last night. . . . I have made large purchases, which, with the Acta Sanctorum, now at last completed, will fill three chests. Verbiest has promised to despatch them immediately. You may well imagine how anxious I am to hear from home, and how desirous to get there. As for news, we have lived so long without it, that the appetite seems almost extinguished. By mere chance I got at Zurich a German account of Massena's campaign in Portugal, written by a physician of his army. My knowledge of the subject assisted me greatly in making out the meaning, and I have found in it some curious matter. As far as I can learn, this is the only original document concerning the war which has yet been published in Germany.

"I have been perfectly well during the journey, and the knowledge it has given me amply repays the expense both of money and of time. It has been with great difficulty that I could keep up my Journal, so fully has every day and every hour been occupied, from five and frequently four in the morning. I have, however, kept it. My spirits have been equal

to any demand which outward circumstances might make upon them; but to live always out of oneself is not possible, and in those circumstances which frequently occur amidst the excitement and exhilaration of such a journey, my lonely feelings have perhaps been more poignant than they would have been amid the even tenor of domestic life; but I have learnt to give them their proper direction, and when I am once more at home, I shall feel the benefit of having travelled.

"God bless you, my dear friend! And believe me most truly and affectionately,

Yours,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq., M.P.

"Keswick, Aug. 23. 1817.

"My dear Wynn,

" . . . .

They tell me, both here and in town, that travelling has fattened me. Certainly it agreed with my bodily health most admirably; whether it be attributable to early rising, continual change of air, or copious libations of good wine, or to all these. The early rising is unluckily the only practice which it would be possible to continue here. As for the wine*, when I

* Let not the reader suppose from this and other commendations of the juice of the grape, that my father was inclined to over-indulgence therein; for no man was ever more strictly temperate. Indeed, his constitution required more generous living than he ordinarily gave it; and part of the benefit he always derived from continental travelling was, as he here intimates, from his partaking more freely of wine when abroad than in the regularity of his domestic life.

think of the red wines of Savoy (the Montmelian in particular), and the white wines of the Rhine and the Moselle, I feel something as the children of Israel did when they remembered the flesh-pots of Egypt. Were I to settle anywhere on the continent, Switzerland should be the country, and probably Lausanne the place. There are lovelier places in the Oberland of Berne, and the adjacent small cantons; but Lausanne has all those comforts which are desirable, and there is as good society in the canton of Vaud as need be desired. We could not gain admittance into Gibbon's garden, though his house belongs to a banker on whom we had bills. The assigned reason for refusing was, that the way lay through a chamber which was occupied by an invalid. I confess that I doubted this, and could not believe that the only way into the garden should be through a bed-chamber. This was a mortifying disappointment. As some compensation, however, our own apartments were not more than 100 yards off, and opened upon a terrace which commanded exactly the same view of the lake and mountains, with no other difference of foreground than a hundred yards will make in looking over gardens and groves of fruit-trees. . . . .

"Does this country, you will ask, appear flat and unprofitable after Alpine scenery? Certainly not. It has lost very little by the comparison, and that little will soon be regained. Skiddaw is by much the most imposing mountain, for its height, that I have yet seen. Many mountains, which are actually as high again from their base, do not appear to more advantage. I find here, as Wordsworth and Sir G.

Beaumont had told me I should, the charm of proportion, and would not exchange Derwentwater for the Lake of Geneva, though I would gladly enrich it with the fruit trees and the luxuriant beauties of a Swiss summer. Their waterfalls, indeed, reduce ours to insignificance. On the other hand, all their streams and rivers are hideously discoloured, so that that which should be one of the greatest charms of the landscape, is in reality a disgusting part of it. The best colour which you see is that of clean soap-suds; the more common one that of the same mixture when dirty. But the rivers have a power, might, and majesty which it is scarcely possible to describe.

"God bless you, my dear Wynn!

Yours most affectionately,

R. S."

To John May, Esq.

"Keswick, Oct. 13. 1817.

"My dear Friend,

"The notion of writing again that letter which the rascal Louis destroyed at Geneva, has, I verily believe, prevented me from beginning one in the natural order of things. I can place myself at Thebes or at Athens on every occasion, dive into Padalon, or scale Mount Calasay*; but to remember what I then wrote, further than the journal you

* See the Curse of Kehama.

have seen might remind me of the facts, is beyond my power. Let us see, however, what can be done, with as little repetition as possible, of what you have taken the trouble to decipher. In speaking of Paris, I probably might have remarked what an out-of-door life is led by the inhabitants, and how prodigiously busy those people are who have nothing to do. There is more stir and bustle than in London, and of a very different character. In London they bear the stamp of business. You see that the crowds who pass by you in Cheapside have something to do, and something to think of; and in Paris you see as clearly, that restlessness and dissipation bring people into the street because they have nothing to do at home. I should think France decidedly inferior to England in beauty of country; yet I did not find the scenery altogether so uninteresting as I had been taught to expect. Picardy has much historical interest to an Englishman, and perhaps the recollection of great events makes me enjoy scenes which might else have been insipid. For I thought of the struggle between Burgundy and France; and in tracts where there was little more than earth and sky to be seen, I remembered that that same earth had been trodden by our countrymen before the battles of Cressy and Agincourt, and that that same sky had seen their victory. The towns, also, have many interesting antiquities, where an antiquarian or artist would find enough to employ him. The rivers have a magnitude and majesty to be found in few English streams. On the other hand, there is a want of wood or of variety of wood. Poplars give a sameness to the

scene, and a sort of sickly colouring, very different from the deep foliage of our oaks and elms. The very general custom of housing the cattle is unfavourable to the appearance of the country; there is a want of life, and motion, and sound. I believe, also, that there are fewer birds than in England. I scarcely remember to have seen a crow or a bird of prey. The most beautiful part of France which we saw (except the Jura country, which has a Swiss character), was French Flanders, which is indeed exceedingly beautiful. The country from Lisle to St. Omers may vie with the richest parts of England. John Awdry was much disappointed with the South of France; perhaps this was because he entered it from Switzerland and Savoy; but the features, as he described them, were naturally unfavourable. The country upon the Loire has been much extolled. Landor told me it had the same fault which I had observed in other parts,—a pale and monotonous colouring from the poplars, which was not relieved by vineyards, and in summer, by sands which the river then left bare. We came upon a fine country as we approached Besançon. The air of the Jura mountains seemed congenial to me; and if I did not look upon the people with some partiality because they were mountaineers, they were a better race in many respects than the natives of Burgundy and Champagne. Were I to visit Switzerland again, I should wish to see more of the Jura. I do not think that a traveller can enter Switzerland in any better direction than by way of Pontarlier and Neufchatel. If the wine of this latter territory could reach Eng-

land, I should think it would have a great sale, for it has the flavour of Burgundy and the body of port. If the duties are lowered (as I understand they are likely to be), it will find its way by the Rhine. . . .

"If the general use of tea could be introduced, it might prove a general benefit. A French breakfast has neither the comfort nor the domestic character of an English one; it is had better at a restaurateur's or an hotel than at home. But domestic habits are what are wanting in France; and if it were the fashion to drink tea, they would be very much promoted by it. In Morocco, tea is gradually superseding the use of coffee. I do not know why it is so little liked upon the continent of Europe, when among us it has become one of the first necessaries of life. We tried it sometimes, but scarcely ever with success; and it is curious enough that we never on any occasion met with cream, except at Chalets in Switzerland, which is famous for it. Neither in France, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, or the Netherlands, rich in dairies as all these countries are, do the inhabitants ever appear to use it. Perhaps I described the lakes of Neufchatel and Geneva in my last letter, and the abominable odour of the great city of Calvinism.

"Since my return we have had much company, and, in consequence, I have been led into much idleness.* Winter is now setting in: although the weather continues fine, the days are shortening fast; long evenings will confine me to my desk, and the retirement

* His friend Mr. Bedford had been passing some weeks at Keswick to their great mutual enjoyment; and Mr. Rickman had also been there for a short time.

which this place affords during the dark season is such, that I am in no danger of being disturbed. At present, I am finishing a paper upon Lope de Vega for the next Quarterly, and preparing the first chapter of the Peninsular War for the press.

Believe me, yours most affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Chauncey Hare Townshend, Esq.

"Oct. 31. 1817.

"My dear Chauncey,

"During this fine autumn (the finest which we can remember in this country) I have frequently regretted that you were not with us, upon our mountain excursions; and thought sometimes how busily your hammer would have been at work among the stones, over which I was treading as ignorantly as the cart-horse in our company.

"You have not estimated Neville White more favourably than he deserves. There does not breathe a better or a nobler heart. Men are sometimes strangely out of their place in this world: there, for instance, is a man living in Milk Street, and busied about Nottingham goods, who, if he were master of a palace and a princely fortune, would do honour to the one, and make the best possible use of the other. I felt towards him just as you have done, at first sight; and recognising instantly the character, scarcely perceived that the individual was a stranger. There is more in these sympathies than the crockery

class of mankind can conceive, or than our wise men have dreamt of in their philosophy.

"Your picture of the Norfolk scenery is very lively and very just. I have been twice in my life at Norwich, and once at Yarmouth, many years ago, long enough to have drawn from that open and level country some images, which were introduced in Thalaba. I remember writing an epistle in blank verse from thence in 1798*, which had some descriptive lines that might be worth transcribing, if they were at hand. It was the unbroken horizon which impressed me, appearing so much wider than at sea; and the skyscapes which it afforded. I had the same impression in passing through Picardy; and if I lived in such a country, should perhaps find as many beauties in the sky as I do here upon the earth. Anywhere I could find food for the heart and the imagination, at those times when we are open to outward influences, except in great cities. If I were confined in them, I should wither away like a flower in a parlour window. Did you notice the cry of the bittern in that country? I heard it between Yarmouth and Norwich. Its spiral flight, when it takes wing, is as remarkable and as peculiar as its cry. This bird has been extirpated here; only one has been seen since I have resided at Keswick, and that was shot by a young Cantab, who ate it for his dinner, and had no more brains in his head than the bittern.

"Having nothing to hope in this world, and nothing to desire in it for myself, except as quiet a

* See vol. i. p. 336.

passage through it as it may please God to grant, my mind, when it takes its course, recurs to the world which is to come, and lays as naturally now the scenes of its day-dreams in Heaven, as it used to do upon earth. I think of the many intimacies I have made among the dead, and with what delight I shall see and converse with those persons whose lives and writings have interested me, to whom I have endeavoured to render justice, or from whom I have derived so much pleasure and benefit of the highest kind. Something perhaps we shall have to communicate, and oh! how much to learn! The Roman Catholics, when they write concerning Heaven, arrange the different classes there with as much precision as a master of the ceremonies could do. Their martyrs, their doctors, their confessors, their monks and their virgins, have each their separate society. As for us poets, they have not condescended to think of us; but we shall find one another out, and a great many questions I shall have to ask of Spenser and of Chaucer. Indeed, I half hope to get the whole story of Cambuscan bold; and to hear the lost books of the Faëry Queen. Lope de Vega and I shall not meet with equal interest, and yet it will be a pleasant meeting.

"What are you now about? If I had seen you here, where we could have conversed at leisure and without reserve, I would have told you of my own projects, formed in youth and now never to be resumed, talked over your own, and have endeavoured to show you where you might gather the freshest laurels. God bless you!

R. S."

*To the Reverend John Jebb.**

"Keswick, Dec. 6. 1817.

"Sir,

"A volume like yours needs no other introduction than its own merits. I received it last night, and rejoice to see such topics treated in a manner so judicious, so forcible, and so impressive. You are treading in the steps of the great and admirable men by whom our church has been reformed and supported; and those who are to come after us will tread in yours. Unless I deceive myself, the state of religion in these kingdoms is better at this time than it has been at any other, since the first fervour of the Reformation. Knowledge is reviving as well as zeal, and zeal is taking the best direction. We stand in need of both when evil principles are so actively at work.

"I am writing the Life of Wesley in such a manner as to comprise our religious history for the last hundred years. It is a subject which I have long meditated, and may God bless the labour. Perhaps you can give me some light into the reasons why Methodism should have made so little progress in Ireland, where the seed seems to have fallen upon a most ungenial soil, though it was scattered with abundant care. In Scotland its failure may be explained by the general respectability of the Scotch clergy, the effect of education, the scattered population, and the cold and cautious character of the

* Afterwards Bishop of Limerick. The book referred to is his first publication: a volume of sermons with notes.

people. Is the jealousy with which the Romish priests watch over their deluded flocks sufficient to account for its failure in Ireland? If so, why was not Quakerism equally unsuccessful?

"I will not apologise for asking your opinion upon this subject. Even if we were not both fortunate enough to possess the same valuable friends, we are now known sufficiently to each other; and men of letters, who hold the same faith, and labour, though in different ways, for the same cause, are bound together by no common ties.

Believe me, Sir,

With sincere respect,

Your obedient servant,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Walter Savage Landor, Esq.

"Keswick, Dec. 17. 1817.

"Perhaps the Lugano Gazette may not have given you the great news from the North, which excites much more interest in me than any thing which is going on at present in the political world. The Greenlandmen, last season, got as far as 84°, and saw no ice in any direction; they were of opinion, that if they could have ventured to make the experiment, they might have reached the pole without any obstruction of this kind. The coast of East Greenland, which had been blocked up for four or five centuries, was open. It is believed that some

great convulsion of nature has broken up the continent of ice which has during those centuries been accumulating; and it is certain that the unnatural cold winds which were experienced throughout the whole of May last, from the S. and S.W., were occasioned by this ice floating into warmer latitudes. This effect is more likely to have been produced by volcanic eruption than by earthquakes alone, because for the last two years the fish have forsaken the Kamtschatka coast, so that the bears (*ἰχθυόφαγοι*) have been carrying on a civil war among themselves, and a war *plus quam civile* with the Russians. Earthquakes would not discompose the fish much, but they have a great objection to marine volcanoes. We are fitting out four ships for a voyage to the pole and the north-west passage. We shall have some curious facts about the needle; possibly even our climate may be improved, and trees will grow large enough for walking sticks in Iceland.

"The amusements of Como may very probably become the amusements of England ere long.* This I think a likely consequence, from the death of the Princess Charlotte. In the lamentations upon this subject there has been a great deal of fulsome canting, and not a little faction; still, among the better part and the better classes of society, there was a much deeper and more general grief than could have been expected or would easily be believed. Two or three persons have told me that in most houses which they entered in London the women were in tears.

* This refers to the Princess of Wales, then living at Como.

"'Tis not the public loss which hath imprest
This general grief upon the multitude;
And made its way at once to every breast,
The old, the young, the gentle, and the rude.
'Tis not that in the hour which might have crowned
The prayers preferred by every honest tongue,
The very hour which should have sent around
Tidings wherewith all churches would have rung,
And all our echoing streets have pealed with gladness,
And all our cities blazed with festal fire,
That then we saw the high-raised hope expire,
And England's expectation quenched in sadness.
This surely might have forced a sudden tear.
Yet had we then thought only of the state,
To-morrow's sun, which would have risen as fair,
Had seen upon our brow no cloud of care.
It is to think of what thou wert so late;
Oh, thou who liest clay-cold upon thy bier,
So young and so beloved, so richly blest
Beyond the common lot of royalty;
The object of thy worthy choice possest,
The many thousand souls that prayed for thee,
Hoping in thine a nation's happiness;
And in thy youth, and in thy wedded bliss,
And in the genial bed — the cradle drest —
Hope standing by, and joy a bidden guest.
'Tis this that from the heart of private life
Makes unsophisticated sorrows flow:
We mourn thee as a daughter and a wife,
And in our human natures feel the blow.*

"Have you succeeded in getting sight of the aspide? In Cyprus they stand in such dread of this serpent, that the reapers have bells fixed to their sides and their sickles: *κοῦφ* they call it there. One traveller names it the asp, and another asks *veterum aspis?* so I suppose it to be your neighbour. I do not know if the venom of your serpent produces death (as some others do), by paralysing the heart,

* This has never been published. The Funeral Song for the Princess Charlotte is a much more elaborate and beautiful composition.

but it may be worth knowing, that in that case the remedy is, to take spirit of hartshorn * in large doses, repeating them as long as the narcotic effect is perceived. A surgeon in India saved himself in this manner, by taking much larger doses than he could have prescribed to any other person, because he understood his own sensations, and proportioned the remedy accordingly. He took a tea-spoonful of the spiritus ammoniæ compositus in a madeira glass-full of water every five minutes for half an hour, and seven other such doses at longer intervals (according to the symptoms) before he considered himself out of danger; in the whole, a wine-glass full of the medicine. This is a very valuable fact, the medicine having lost its repute in such cases, because it was always administered in insufficient doses.

"God bless you!

R. S."

* Spirit of hartshorn, immediately applied, is the best remedy for the sting of a wasp: there may be some affinity in the two cases, only the application is inward in the one, and outward in the other.—*Ed.*

CHAPTER XXIII.

RETROSPECT OF LIFE. — REVIEWING. — LIFE OF WESLEY. — USES OF AFFLICTION. — EDINBURGH ANNUAL REGISTER. — WESTMORELAND ELECTION. — HUMBOLDT. — PAPER ON THE POOR LAWS. — COBBETT. — NUTRITIVE QUALITIES OF COFFEE. — MILMAN'S POEM OF SAMOR. — OFFER OF LIBRARIANSHIP OF THE ADVOCATES' LIBRARY, EDINBURGH. — SCARCITY OF LITERARY MEN IN AMERICA. — RITCHIE. — MUNGO PARK. — RECOLLECTIONS OF HIS TOUR ON THE CONTINENT. — HE IS ATTACKED FROM THE HUSTINGS AT A WESTMORELAND ELECTION. — WISHES TO PRINT HIS POEMS IN A CHEAPER FORM. — MOB MEETINGS. — CONGRATULATIONS TO MR. JUSTICE COLERIDGE ON HIS MARRIAGE. — LITERARY ADVICE. — HABITS OF ASCETICISM NOT UNFAVOURABLE TO LONG LIFE. — MR. WILBERFORCE VISITS KESWICK. — SCHOOL REBELLION. — REMARKABLE SEASON. — COMPARATIVE HAPPINESS OF CHILDHOOD AND RIPER YEARS. — CHANGES IN THE CRIMINAL LAW WANTED — 1818.

AFFAIRS in the political world had now somewhat settled down, and the immediate fear of an insurrectionary movement had passed away.

The original intention of the Government in wishing my father to come up to town for the purpose of conferring with him, was, as he had supposed, to endeavour to induce him to conduct a political journal which should aim at counteracting the influence of the seditious and anarchical portion of the daily and weekly press. This, however, was a scheme which no inducement they could have offered would have per-

suaded him to enter into; and, indeed, we have seen that he had declined an offer of the same nature, which would have combined far greater independence of action with large pecuniary advantages. It appears, however, that they were by no means so anxious that he should write "*ex proprio motu*," as under their own especial influence; and he was urged to employ the Quarterly Review as a vehicle for his opinions and arguments, in preference to a separate and independent publication.

This, in the first instance, he consented to do; and the result was that article "On the Rise and Progress of popular Disaffection"* which excited the "ponderous displeasure" of Mr. William Smith; but for some time he still adhered to his intention of embodying his views of the dangers and evils of the existing state of society in England, and the remedies, in a small volume fitted in size and price for general circulation.

Other avocations, however, intervened, and together with the improved aspect of public affairs, caused him to lay aside this idea for the present. "As to politics," he writes at the close of the year, "I have nothing to do with them now. The battle has been won; but that, indeed, was a cause in which I would have spent something more precious than ink." . . . . "When I touch upon politics," he continues, "it will be with a wider range and a larger view than belongs to any temporary topics." It seems probable, indeed, that the Colloquies on

* This article was reprinted in his Essays.

the Progress and Prospects of Society, took their rise from the ideas thus aroused.

The first letter with which the new year opens shows pleasingly how abiding were his feelings of gratitude to his early friend Mr. Wynn, and also speaks of his present literary employments.

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq., M.P.

"Keswick, Jan. 1. 1818.

"My dear Wynn,

"Many happy returns of the new year to you and yours. It is now thirty years since you and I first met in Dean's Yard, and in the course of these years half the human race who were then living have gone under ground. How long either of us may keep above it, God knows; but while we do, there is little likelihood that any circumstances can break or loosen an attachment which has continued so long. Your path has been just what might have been predicted,—straight, honourable, and in full view, only that one might have expected to have found you on the other side the house and in office; and one day or other (the sooner the better) I trust to see you there. What mine might have been without your helping hand, when I was among the bogs and briars, I know not. With that help it has been a very pleasant up-hill road, with so many incidents by the way, that the history of them would make no bad Pilgrim's Progress, especially as I am now at rest among the

Delectable Mountains, and have little more to do than to cross the river whenever my turn comes.

"We are enjoying a beautiful winter here. No snow has yet fallen in the valley, and it lies on the fells not raggedly, but in an even line, so that Skiddaw and Grisdale bear no distant resemblance to the Swiss mountains, and imbibe tints at morning and evening which may vie with any thing that ever was seen upon Mont Blanc or Jungfrau.

"I am writing for the Quarterly Review upon the Poor Laws, or, rather, upon the means of improving the lower classes, — a practical paper, containing, I think, some hints which any clergyman or other influential person in a parish may usefully improve. It is not unlikely that I may gradually withdraw from the Review; that is to say, as soon as I can live without it. It takes up far too great a portion of my time; for although no man can take to task-work with less reluctance, still, from the very circumstance of its being task-work, — something which must be done, and not what I desire at the time to do, — it costs me twice or thrice the time of any other composition, as much in the course of the year as it took to write Thalaba or Kehama. This last poem is going to press for a fourth edition; they sell slowly and steadily.

"The life of Wesley is my favourite employment just now, and a very curious book it will be, looking at Methodism abroad as well as at home, and comprehending our religious history for the last hundred years. I am sure I shall treat this subject with moderation. I hope I come to it with a sober

judgment, a mature mind, and perfect freedom from all unjust prepossessions of any kind. There is no party which I am desirous of pleasing, none which I am fearful of offending; nor am I aware of any possible circumstance which might tend to bias me one way or other from the straight line of impartial truth. For the bigot I shall be far too philosophical; for the libertine far too pious. The Ultra-churchman will think me little better than a Methodist, and the Methodists will wonder what I am. *Ἅγια ἁγίοις* will be my motto.

"My books from Milan have reached London;—something more than 100 volumes. Ramusio is among them, and the Gesta Dei. I have not yet heard of my Acta Sanctorum, the arrival of which will form a grand day in my life. Little leisure as I find for poetry, and seldom indeed as I think of it, there is yet a sort of reluctance in me wholly to give up any scheme of a poem on which I have ever thought with any degree of fondness; and because I had meditated a Jewish poem many years ago, I bought at Milan the great Bibliotheca Rabinica of Barlotacci, as a repository of materials. Could I have afforded to have written verses during those years when nobody bought them, I verily believe I should have written more than any of my predecessors. God bless you!

R. S."

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"Keswick, March 10. 1818.

"My dear Scott,

"I am glad that the first tidings which informed me of your illness, told of your recovery also. There is an enjoyment of our absent friends, even of those from whom we are far distant, in talking and thinking of them, which makes a large part of the happiness of life. It is a great thing to be in the same place with a friend, it is something to be in the same planet. And whenever you are removed to a better, there are few men whose loss will be more widely felt in this, for I know no one who has administered so much delight to so extensive a part of the public. I hope your illness has left no weakness behind it. We stand in need sometimes of visitations which may lead us to look towards eternity; and in such cases the stroke is merciful when it falls on the body. There is a joyousness, too, in the sense of returning health, — a freshness of sensation such as one might expect from a draught of the fountain of youth.

"About four months ago, John Ballantyne wrote to ask me if he should dispose of my property in the Ed. An. Register to Constable, upon the same terms as those of the other persons who had the same shares in it. As I had given it up for a lost concern, I was very glad to hear that I was to have about the same sum which the share had cost, in a bill from Constable at twelve months' date; four months, however, have elapsed, and I have heard

nothing farther. Perhaps, if you have an opportunity, you will do me the kindness to ask how the matter stands.

"The neighbouring county is in an uproar already with the expected election. —— has succeeded in producing as much turbulence there as he could desire; and if we may judge of what the play will be by what the rehearsal has been, it may prove a very serious tragedy before it is over. I am out of the sphere of this mischief. We shall have mobs, I think, upon the Poor-Law question, which is as perilous in its nature as a corn bill, and yet must be taken in hand. I know not whether the next Quarterly Review will look the danger in the face, and say honestly that we must be prepared to meet it. Preventive measures are very easy, and would be found effectual. How grievously do we want some man of commanding spirit in the House of Commons to do constantly what Canning only rouses himself to do now and then. There is, however, good promise in the Solicitor-General; to him, I think, we may look with hope, and to Peel.

"I saw Humboldt at Paris; never did any man portray himself more perfectly in his writings than he has done. His excessive volubility, his fulness of information, and the rapidity with which he fled from every fact into some wide generalisation, made you more acquainted with his intellectual character in half an hour than you would be with any other person in half a year. Withal, he appeared exceedingly good-natured and obliging. It was at Mackenzie's that I met him.

"Remember us to Mrs. Scott and your daughter, who is now, I suppose, the flower of the Tweed.

Believe me, my dear Scott,

Ever affectionately yours,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

In a preceding letter my father refers to an article on the Poor Laws which he was then preparing for the Quarterly Review. This was a subject he would hardly have taken up of himself, being well aware of his inability to handle topics requiring a clear head for statistical calculation and political economy. He had, however, been urged to it by Mr. Rickman, who furnished him with information and argument on all those points he felt himself unequal to—"as a history of the poor rates, a *catalogue raisonné* of the abominable effects of the Poor Laws, an *exposé* of the injudicious quackeries which from generation to generation had made bad worse."

It appears that although "the Poor-Law question and its remedies, if to be remedied," would have seemed, of all subjects, one of the least objectionable for discussion, Gifford at first had some fears lest it might be rather above the temperature of the Review, and to his hesitation about inserting it (before he had seen it) the following letter refers; while the next shows that a perusal of the paper removed his objections.

To John Rickman, Esq.

"April 5. 1818.

"My dear R.,

"I apprehended, as you know, some such demurrer on the part of the feeble. They are, I believe, the only persons who, when engaged in mortal combat, were ever afraid of provoking their enemies, or striking them too hard. . . . . .

"Murray wrote me a brief note the other day, wherein, without any mention of this paper, he said he never desired to see another article upon either politics or religion in the Review, because they are 'certain of offending a great mass of people.' I replied to this at some length in a way which for a little while would impress the magnus homo; but because Mackintosh and a few other Ops. praise a number which does them no harm, he fancies because they are pleased the rest of his readers must be pleased too. This is the mere impression for the moment; but that the Review will ever proceed in a bold, upright, and straightforward course is not to be expected.

"I have a chance letter from Stuart: he says Cobbett has fallen one third in sale, and all such publications are declining, but the anarchists are as active as ever, and new opportunities will occur for bringing their venom into life. 'These wretches,' he continues, 'are effecting their purposes by libelling; they are driving off the ground every man that can oppose them; they are conquering by scandal, and

Ministers wish as much as others to keep out of the way. Unless this spirit of scandal is put down, unless the licentiousness of the press be restrained, certainly it will effect a revolution, — restrained I mean by new laws, and new regulations. It is altogether, as at present practised, a *new thing*, not older than the French Revolution. I can perceive every one shrinking from it, — you, me, Wordsworth, Coleridge, &c. Every one about the press dreads Cobbett's scandal; and thus when a man throws off all consideration of character, he has all others in his power. Even the Ministry, too, and their friends, I think shrink from those who fight their battles, when covered with filth in the fray.'

" Stuart is wrong in two points. This sort of scandal is certainly as old as Junius and Wilkes, perhaps much older; and he mistakes my feelings upon the subject and Wordsworth's.

" God bless you!

R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

" April 11. 1818.

" My dear R.,

" I am not a little pleased that the paper has passed through the hands of Gifford with so little mutilation. . . . . My letter to Murraymagne in reply to his intended act of exclusion, has had its proper effect; but behold the said Murraymagne does not regard the Poor Law paper as political:

'Such papers as these,' he says, 'are exceedingly desirable for the Review, because they are of essential service to the country, and they must obtain for us the esteem of all well-thinking men.' He only meant that we should avoid all *party* politics. I wish he did mean this. However, for the present we have got a most important paper — most important in two points — for strengthening authority, as much as for its remedy for the evil of the Poor Laws.

. . . . . .

"The second Police Report is not of the character which you supposed. There is much valuable matter in it; and indeed, both Reports furnish stronger positions for me than for the enemy to occupy. The Bow-street men appear to great advantage in both. It really appears as if the coffee shops would almost supersede dram-drinking, so comfortable do the working classes find *warmth* and *distention* (your philosophy). Do you know that of all known substances coffee produces the most of that excitement which is required in fatigue? The hunters in the Isle of France and Bourbon take no other provision into the woods. And Bruce tells us that the viaticum of the Galla in their expeditions consists of balls of ground coffee and butter, one per diem (I believe) the size of a walnut sufficing to prevent the sense of hunger. I have just made a curious note upon the same subject for the History of Brazil: a people in the very heart of S. America, living beside a lake of unwholesome water, instead of making maize beer, like all their neighbours, carbonised their maize, — as good a substitute for coffee as any which was

used under Bonaparte's commercial system; and this was their sole beverage, and it was found very conducive to health.

"Edith May has found a brazen or copper spear-head, upon Swinside, in a craggy part of the mountain, where it may have laid unseen for centuries. It is perfectly green but not corroded; exceedingly brittle, quite plain, but of very neat workmanship, as if it had been cast, — one of my spans in length.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Chauncey Hare Townshend, Esq.

"Keswick, April 12, 1818.

"My dear Chauncey.

"I have just finished Henry Milman's poem, a work of great power. But the story is ill constructed, and the style has a vice analogous to that which prevailed in prose about 170 years ago, when every composition was overlaid with strained thoughts and far-fetched allusions. The faults here are a perpetual stretch and strain of feeling; and the too frequent presence of the narrator, bringing his own fancies and meditations in the foreground, and thereby — as in French landscape-engraving — calling off attention from the main subject, and destroying the effect. With less poetry Samor would have been a better poem. Milman has been endeavouring to adapt the moody and thoughtful character of Wordsworth's philosophical poetry to heroic narra-

tion: they are altogether incompatible; and Wordsworth himself, when he comes to narrate in his higher strains, throws it aside like a wrestler's garment, and is as severe a writer as Dante, who is the great master in this style. If Milman can perceive or be persuaded of his fault, he has powers enough for any thing; but it is a seductive manner, and I think that as our poetry in Cowley's days was overrun with conceits of thought, it is likely in the next generation to be overflown with this exuberance of feeling.

"This is a great error. That poetry (I am speaking of heroic narrative) which would reach the heart, must go straight to the mark like an arrow. Away with all trickery and ornaments when pure beauty is to be represented in picture or in marble; away with drapery when you would display muscular strength. Call artifices of this kind to your aid in those feebler parts which must occur in every narrative, and which ought to be there to give the other parts their proper relief.

"Henry Milman was here, with an elder brother, about four years ago, who lodged at Keswick for some twelve months. He is a fine young man: and his powers are very great. They are, however, better fitted for the drama than for narration; the drama admits his favourite strain of composition, and is easier in its structure. Indeed, it is as much easier to plan a play than a poem of such magnitude as Samor, as it is to build a gentleman's house than a cathedral.

"Do you know anything of Sir George Dallas? He has sent me some marvellous verses by a son of

his not yet thirteen; as great a prodigy as I have ever read of. Verse appears as easy to him as speech; Latin verse is at his fingers' end like English; and he has acted a part in a play of his own composition like another young Roscius.

. . . . . .

"I am busy with history myself, and have written no poetry for many months; why this disuse, there is here hardly room to explain, if it were worth explanation. The account of Lope de Vega in the last Quarterly is mine, as you would probably guess. I have read widely in Spanish poetry; and might in historical and literary recollections call myself half a Spaniard, if, being half a Portuguese also, this would leave any room for the English part of my intellectual being. I anticipate much pleasure in showing you the treasures with which I am surrounded here upon these shelves. God bless you!

R. S."

In the course of the spring of this year, an offer was made to my father of an appointment, which it might have been imagined would have been more suited to his habits and likings than any other that had been proposed to his acceptance, and which, indeed, had it been made to him in earlier life it is more than probable he would have gladly taken advantage of. This was the situation of Librarian to the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh; the salary 400*l.* a-year, with the prospect of an increase, and the labour of making a catalogue attached to it. "Few persons," he says, speaking of this offer,

"would dislike such labour less, but I am better employed. I do not love great cities. I will not remove further from my friends (being already too far from them); and having, God be thanked, no pecuniary anxieties, I am contented where I am and as I am, wanting nothing and wishing nothing."

In thus expressing his freedom from pecuniary anxiety (of which in reality he had so large a share), it seems probable that he alluded chiefly to the small provision the Laureateship had enabled him to secure for his family by means of a life insurance. In other respects, however he might feel in moments of high hope and active exertion, when he perceived his reputation steadily rising, and his work becoming more remunerative, there were many times when the consciousness came over him that his subsistence depended upon his ability to follow day by day "his work and his labour until the evening;" and when the feeling that sickness might at any time, and that old age certainly would "dim the eye and deaden the memory, and palsy the hand," came across him like a cloud over the face of the sun.

This the reader will see strikingly exemplified in a letter to Mr. Bedford written at the close of the year, which forms a singular contrast to the expressions my father uses respecting this offer. It would seem, indeed, that he had taken root so firmly among the mountains of Cumberland, and was so unwilling to encounter the difficulties of a removal, and to take upon him new habits of life, that he exercised unconsciously a kind of self-deception whenever an offer was made to him, and con-

jured up for the time feelings of security from anxiety which had no solid foundation, but which served for the time to excuse him to himself for declining them.

To John Kenyon, Esq.

"Keswick, June 13. 1818.

"My dear Sir,

"Your letter to Mr. Coleridge, which has this day arrived, enables me to thank you for Dobrizhoffer, and for the good old Huguenot Jean de Leny. The American by whom the letter was sent to my brothers has not yet made his appearance at the Lakes. When he comes I will provide him with an introduction to Wordsworth if he should not bring one from London; and if he is particularly desirous of seeing live poets, he shall have credentials for Walter Scott. I suppose an American inquires for them as you or I should do in America for a skunk or an opossum. They are become marvellously abundant in England; so that publications which twenty years ago would have attracted considerable attention, are now coming from the press in shoals unnoticed. This makes it the more remarkable that America should be so utterly barren: since the Revolution they have not produced a single poet who has been heard of on this side of the Atlantic. Dwight and Barlow both belong to the Revolution; and well was it for the Americans, taking them into the account, that we could not say of them — *tam Marte, quam Mercurio.*

"I am very sorry that your friend Ritchie should have gone upon an expedition which has proved fatal to every one who has yet undertaken it, and which I think the amateur geographising 'gentlemen of England who sit at home at ease' are altogether unjustifiable in pursuing at such a cost of valuable lives. The object is not tantamount, as it is in a voyage of discovery. In such voyages men are only exposed to some additional risk in the way of their profession, and the reward, if they return safe, is certain and proportionate; but, here, Mungo Park went upon his second expedition literally because he could not support his family after the first. If, however, Ritchie should live to accomplish his object, I am no ways apprehensive that his reputation will be eclipsed by his intended rival Ali Bey, that solemn professor of humbug having always made less use of his opportunities than any other traveller. . . .

"If you go through Cologne (as I suppose you will), do not fail to visit St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins, whose relics form the most extraordinary sight that the Catholic superstition has to display, You will also find the Three Kings in the same city well worthy a visit to their magnificent shrine. From thence to Mentz and Frankfort you will see everywhere the havoc which the Revolution has made; further I cannot accompany your journey. We came to Frankfort from Heidelburgh and the Black Forest.

Yours most truly,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq., M.P. (*Boulogne*).

"Keswick, Aug. 4. 1818.

"My dear Wynn,

"I envy you your French wines, and in a less degree your French cookery also, both indispensable in the alderman's heaven, where the stomach is infinite, the appetite endless, and the dinner eternal. I should envy also your bathing upon that noble beach, if Derwentwater were not within reach, and still better the rock baths in Newlands, which are the perfection of bathing. What you say of the country about Boulogne is just what I should have supposed it to be from what we saw upon the road, and the place itself is a very interesting one. I slept there, and did not leave it till noon the next day, happening to have an acquaintance there. . . . I had been told that the road to Paris was uninteresting, but to me it appeared far otherwise; for even if it had not possessed an historical interest of the highest kind to an Englishman, the scenery itself is in many parts very striking.

"You will be better pleased to hear that, if the carriers do not disappoint me, I may expect tomorrow to receive my three cases of books, with the Acta Sanctorum, and some fourscore volumes besides, the gatherings of my last year's journey from Como to Brussels. Far better, and far more agreeably, would my time and thoughts be employed with the saints of old than with the sinners of the present day, with past events and in other countries than

with the current politics of our own. Heaven knows I have no predilection for a train of thought which brings with it nothing elevating and nothing cheerful. But I cannot shut my eyes either to the direct tendency of the principles which are now at work, or to their probable success; inevitable indeed, and at no very distant time, unless some means be taken for checking the progress of the evil.

"The state of religious feeling appears to differ much in different parts of France. In most places we found that the churches were very ill attended, but at Auxerre they were so full that we literally could not decently walk in to examine them as we wished to have done. In Switzerland the Protestant cantons have suffered more than the Catholic ones. I had good opportunities of inquiring into this in the Pays de Vaud, and the state of religion in Geneva is now notorious. Upon the banks of the Rhine all the inhabitants who were not actually employed in the fields seemed to be busy in performing a pilgrimage. It was a most striking sight to see them; men, women, and children toiling along bareheaded, under a July sun, singing German hymns. I suspect that the progress of irreligion has kept pace with the extent of French books in the Catholic part of Europe, and that where they have not found their way the people remain in the same state as before. But if things remain quiet for one generation the Catholic Church will recover its ascendency; its clergy are wise as serpents, and with all their errors one cannot, considering all things, but heartily wish them success.

"You should go to St. Omers, if it were only to groan over the ruin of its magnificent cathedral. The country between that place and Lisle is the perfection of cultivated scenery, and the view from Cassel the finest I have ever seen over a flat country.

"God bless you, my dear Wynn! I half hope Parliament may be sitting in December, that I may meet you in town.

Yours most affectionately,

R. S."

The commencement of the next letter refers to some remarks of Mr. Bedford upon a pamphlet (in the form of that addressed to William Smith), which my father had drawn up in reply to an attack which was made upon him during a contested election in Westmoreland. He had been accused from the hustings of having busied himself greatly on the Tory side, and he was denounced to an excited multitude as one rolling in riches unworthily obtained. To the former charge he could have given a direct denial, not having taken any part whatever in the matter; the latter one need not be further alluded to than as proving some little forbearance on his part in not carrying out his intention of publishing a reply. It is right to add that a counter-statement was made from the same place, on a subsequent occasion, by the same person.

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Sept. 6. 1818.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"If you had written to me in extenuation, as you term it, I should have been as nearly angry with you as anything could make me, for how could I possibly attribute anything you had said to any motive but the right one, or wherefore should I be more displeased with you for not liking my extended epistle more than you were with me for not liking your Dalmatian wine? The roughness of the one did not suit my palate, nor the asperity of the other your taste. And what of that? I dare say you think quite as favourably of your wine as before, and I am not a whit the less satisfied with my style objurgatory. But let that pass. . . . .

"I have just purchased Gifford's Ben Jonson. He supposes that the Laureate continues to receive his tierce of Spanish canary, and recommends him yearly to drink to Old Ben in the first glass. Tell him, if he will get me reinstated in my proper rights, I will drink to Ben Jonson not once a year, but once a day, and to him also. By the manner in which he speaks of Sidney's Arcadia, I conclude that either he has never read the book, or has totally forgotten it.

"So you are to have a Palace-yard meeting to-morrow. How few weeks have elapsed since Hunt was beaten and blackguarded in the face of the mob till his own miscreants hooted at him, and yet, you

see, he is in full feather again. The fellow ought to be tried for sedition; he would certainly be found guilty, for the jury, as yet, would be nothing worse than Burdettites, and, therefore, disposed to give him his deserts. And, during his confinement, he should be restricted to prison diet, kept from all intercourse with visitors, and left to amuse himself with the Bible, the prayer-book, and Drelincourt upon death, or the Whole Duty of Man, for his whole library. At the end of two years he would come out cured. . .

"God bless you!

R. S."

To John Taylor Coleridge, Esq.

"Keswick, Sept. 8. 1818.

"My dear Sir,

"I am glad to hear that you have taken your chance for happiness in that state in which alone there is a chance of finding it. Men in your station too frequently let the proper season go by, waiting till they can afford to start with a showy establishment. Among those who have not more than an ordinary share of good principles, this is a very common cause of libertine habits; and they who escape this evil incur another, which is sometimes not less fatal. They look out for a wife when they think themselves rich enough, and this is like going to market for one: the choice on their part is not made from those feelings upon which the foundation of happiness must be laid; and, on the other part, they

are accepted, not for their own sakes, but for the sake of the establishment which they offer. Similarity of disposition is not consulted, and there is generally in such cases a disparity of years, which is not very likely to produce it. You have chosen a better course, and may God bless you in it.

"The most profitable line of composition is reviewing. You have good footing in the Quarterly, and I am glad of it, for heretofore there has been vile criticism in that journal upon poetry, and upon fine literature in general. This connection need not preclude you from writing for the British Review. Translation is of all literary labour the worst paid; that is, of all such labour as is paid at all: and yet there are so many poor hungry brethren and sisters of the grey goose-quill upon the alert, that new books are sent out from France and Germany by the sheet as they pass through the press, lest the translation should be forestalled.

"Anything which is not bargained for with the booksellers is, of course, matter of speculation, and success is so much a matter of accident (that is to say, temporary success) in literature, that the most knowing of them are often as grievously deceived as a young author upon his first essay. Biography, however, is likely to succeed; and, with the London libraries at hand, the research for it would be rather pleasurable than toilsome. History, which is the most delightful of all employments (*experto crede*), is much less likely to be remunerated. I have not yet received so much for the History of Brazil as for a single article in the Quarterly Review. But there

are many fine subjects which, if well handled, might prove prizes in the lottery. A history of Charles I. and the Interregnum, or of all the Stuart kings, upon a scale of sufficient extent, and written upon such principles as you would bring to it, would be a valuable addition to the literature of our country, — useful to others, as well as honourable to yourself. Venice offers a rich story, and one which, unhappily, is now complete. Sweden, also, is a country fruitful in splendid and memorable events. For this, indeed, it would be necessary to acquire the Norse languages. Sharon Turner acquired them, and the Welsh to boot, for a similar purpose, without neglecting the duties of his practice. It may almost be asserted that men will find leisure for whatever they seriously desire to do. . . . .

Believe me,
Yours faithfully,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Sharon Turner, Esq.

"Keswick, Sept. 21. 1818.

" My dear Turner,

" You have taken, I see, Cornano for your physician. Had I made the same experiment, I should have been disposed to prefer a diet of roots, fruits, and esculent plants to bread, which is so likely to be adulterated. There is as much difference in the stomachs of men as in their tempers and faces; severe abstinence is necessary for some, and others feed

high and drink hard, and yet attain to a robust old age; but unquestionably the sparing system has most facts in its favour, and I have often remarked with wonder the great length of life to which some of the hardest students and most inveterate self-tormentors among the monastic orders have attained. Truly glad shall I be if you derive from your system the permanent benefit which there seems such good reason to expect. Both you and I must wish to remain as long as we can in this 'tough world' for the sake of others. Thank Heaven it is no rack to us, though we have both reached that stage in our progress in which the highest pleasure that this life can afford is the anticipation of that which is to follow it.

"You have made a wise determination for your son William, for I believe that medical studies are of all others the most unfavourable to the moral sense. Anatomical studies are so revolting, that men who carry any feeling to the pursuit are glad to have it seared as soon as possible. I do not remember ever in the course of my life to have been so shocked as by hearing Carlisle relate some bravados of young men in this state when he was a student himself.

"I wonder you should have any qualms at going to the press, knowing, as you do, how capriciously at best, and in general with what injustice and impudent partiality, praise or blame is awarded by contemporary critics, and how absolutely worthless their decrees are in the court of posterity, by which the merits of the case must be finally determined. I am so certain that any subject which has amused your

wakeful hours must be worthy to employ the thoughts of other men, and to give them a profitable direction, that, without knowing what the subject is, I exhort you to cast away your fears.

" Remember me most kindly to your household.

Yours affectionately,

R. SOUTHEY."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq., M. P.

" Keswick, Nov. 4. 1818.

" My dear Wynn,

" Since I wrote to you at Boulogne, the greater part of my time has been consumed by interruptions of which I ought not to complain, seeing they must needs be beneficial to my health, however they may be felt in the sum total of the year's work. I have had for a guest C——. There is something remarkable in the history of this family. His grandmother was a she-philosopher, a sort of animal much worse than a she-bear. Her housekeeper having broken her leg, she was exceedingly indignant at not being able to convince her that there was no such thing as pain; and when the poor woman complained that the children disturbed her by playing in a room over her head, she insisted upon it that that was impossible, because it was the nature of sound to ascend; and, therefore, she could not be disturbed unless they played in the room under her. This good lady bred up her children as nearly as she could upon Rousseau's maxims, and was especially careful that they

should receive no religious instruction whatever. Her daughter had nearly grown up before she ever entered a church, and then she earnestly entreated a friend to take her there from motives of curiosity. This daughter has become a truly religious woman. The son has not departed from the way in which he was trained up; but as he is not a hater of religion, only an unbeliever in it, and has a good living in his gift, he chooses that his only son should take orders, this living being the most convenient means of providing an immediate establishment for him!

"C—— introduced himself to me about three years ago by sending me some poems, which for a youth of seventeen were almost better than should be wished. . . . . When he first proposed to visit me, his father was thrown into a paroxysm of anger, notwithstanding the *mollia tempora fandi* had been chosen for venturing to make the request; but he suffered him to see me in London last year. He had formed a notion that I was a Methodist, and drank nothing but water; and I believe it raised me considerably in his estimation when C—— assured him that I seemed to enjoy wine as much as any man.

. . . . . .

"Wilberforce, also, has been here with all his household, and such a household! The principle of the family seems to be that, provided the servants have faith, good works are not to be expected from them, and the utter disorder which prevails in consequence is truly farcical. The old coachman would figure upon the stage. Upon making some complaint about the horses, he told his master and

mistress that since they had been in this country they had been so lake-and-river-and-mountain-and-valley-mad, that they had thought of nothing which they ought to think of. I have seen nothing in such pell-mell, topsy-turvy, and chaotic confusion as Wilberforce's apartments since I used to see a certain breakfast-table in Skeleton Corner.* His wife sits in the midst of it like Patience on a monument, and he frisks about as if every vein in his body were filled with quicksilver; but, withal, there is such a constant hilarity in every look and motion, such a sweetness in all his tones, such a benignity in all his thoughts, words, and actions, that all sense of his grotesque appearance is presently overcome, and you can feel nothing but love and admiration for a creature of so happy and blessed a nature.

"A few words now concerning myself. It was my intention to have spent the Christmas in London; a very unexpected cause induced me to delay my journey. More than six years have elapsed since the birth of my youngest child: all thoughts of having another had naturally ceased. In February or March, however, such an event may be looked for. My spirits are more depressed by this than they ought to be; but you may well imagine what reflections must arise. I am now in my forty-fifth year, and if my life should be prolonged it is but too certain that I should never have heart again to undertake the duty which I once performed with such diligence and such delightful hope. It is well for us

* A part of Christ Church, so called, where Mr. Wynn's rooms were situated.

that we are not permitted to choose for ourselves. One happy choice, however, I made when I betook myself to literature as my business in life. When I have a heart at ease, there can be no greater delight than it affords me; and when I put away sad thoughts and melancholy forebodings, there is no resource so certain.

"I begin to be solicitous about making such a provision as should leave me at ease in my ways and means, if loss of health or any other calamity should render me incapable of that constant labour, from which, while health and ability may last, I shall have no desire to shrink. When my next poem is finished, I shall be able to do what has never before been in my power, — to demand a sum for it.

"God bless you, my dear Wynn!

Yours most affectionately,

R. S."

To John May, Esq.

"Keswick, Nov. 16. 1818.

"My dear Friend,

". . . . . .

I know something of rebellions, and generally suspect that there has been some fault in the master as well as in the boys, just as a mutiny in a man of war affords a strong presumption of tyranny against the captain. Without understanding the merits of this case, it is easy to perceive that the boys believed their privileges were invaded, and fancied that the

Magna Charta of Eton was in danger (the Habeas Corpus in schools is in favour of the governors — a writ issued against the subject, and affecting him *in tail*), —— took the patriotic side, acting upon Whig principles. They are very good principles in their time and place, and youth is a good time and school a good place for them. When he grows older, he will see the necessity of subordination, and learn that it is only by means of order that liberty can be secured. . . . . .

I have a fellow-feeling for ——, because I was myself expelled from Westminster, not for a rebellion (though in that too I had my share), but for an act of authorship. Wynn and Bedford and Strachey (who is now chief secretary at Madras), and myself, planned a periodical paper in emulation of the Microcosm. It was not begun before the two former had left school, and Bedford and I were the only persons actually engaged in it. I well remember my feelings when the first number appeared on Saturday, March 1. 1792. It was Bedford's writing, but that circumstance did not prevent me from feeling that I was that day borne into the world as an author; and if ever my head touched the stars while I walked upon the earth it was then. It seemed as if I had overleapt a barrier, which till then had kept me from the fields of immortality, wherein my career was to be run. In all London there was not so vain, so happy, so elated a creature as I was that day; and, in truth, it was an important day in my life; far more so than I, or than any one else could have anticipated, for I was expelled for the fifth number.

The subject of that number was *flogging*, and Heaven knows I thought as little of giving offence by it, as of causing an eclipse or an earthquake. I treated it in a strange, whimsical, and ironical sort of manner, because it had formed a part of the religious ceremonies of the heathens, and the Fathers had held that the gods of the heathens were our devils, and so I proved it to be an invention of the Devil, and therefore unfit to be practised in schools; and though this was done with very little respect for the Devil, or the Fathers, or the heathen gods, or the schoolmasters, yet I as little expected to offend one as the other. I was full of Gibbon at the time, and had caught something of Voltaire's manner. And for this I was privately expelled from Westminster, and for this I was refused admission at Christ Church, where Randolph, from the friendship which he professed for my uncle, could not else have decently refused to provide for me by a studentship: and so I went to Balliol instead, in a blessed hour; for there I found a man of sterling virtue (Edmund Seward), who led me right, when it might have been easy to have led me wrong. I used to call him *Talus* for his unbending morals and iron rectitude, and his strength of body also justified the name. His death in the year 1795 was the first severe affliction that I ever experienced; and sometimes even now I dream of him, and wake myself by weeping, because even in my dreams I remember that he is dead. I loved him with my whole heart, and shall remember him with gratitude and affection as one who was my moral father, to the last moment of my life; and to meet him again will

at that moment be one of the joys to which I shall look forward in eternity. My dear John May, I have got into a strain which I neither intended nor foresaw. Misfortunes, as the story says, are good for something. The stream of my life would certainly have taken a different direction, if I had not been expelled, and I am satisfied that it could never have held a better course. . . . . .

"God bless you, my dear friend!

Believe me,

Most truly and affectionately yours,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Nov. 28. 1818.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"This is a most remarkable season with us. On the 20th of November we had French beans at dinner, and now (on the 28th), there has not been the slightest snow on the mountains, nor the slightest appearance of frost in the valley. The late flowers continue to blossom still, and the early ones are pushing forward as if it were spring. The great scarlet poppy has two large buds ready to burst, and your favourite blue thistle has brought forth a flower. But what is more extraordinary, the annual poppies, whose stalks, to all appearance dead and dry, were left in the ground, merely till Mrs. Lovel should give directions for clearing them away, have in many instances shot out fresh leaves of diminutive

size, and produced blossoms correspondently small, not bigger than a daisy. This is in our own garden, which, as you know, has no advantages of shelter or situation; in happier spots the gardens have more the appearance of September than of winter.

"Gifford will tell you that I have been speaking a good word in behalf of the historical painters. (By the bye, get Nash to take you to see Haydon's great picture, which is prodigiously fine.) I am now upon the Copyright question, which I shall make as short as possible; a few days will finish it, and a few days more finish a paper upon the Catacombs, in which I have brought together a great collection of facts from out-of-the-way sources, some of them very curious. The Copyright must have place in the present number, and no doubt it will, being much more for Murray's interest than mine. The Catacombs will eke out my ways and means for the next quarter, and I shall have done with the Quarterly Review for the next six months.

"I shall not move southward, till both the Brazil and the Wesley are finished. Three winter months will do wonders, as I hope to be entirely free from interruptions. Other circumstances would not allow me to leave home before March, nor will I move then unless these works are off my hands. I shall then start fairly, without impediment, and in full force for the Peninsular War; and thus my life passes, looking to the completion of one work for the sake of beginning another, and having to start afresh for a new career as often as I reach the goal. And so I suppose it will be, till I break down and founder

upon the course. But if I live a few years longer in possession of my faculties, I will do great things.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq., M.P.

"Keswick, Nov. 30. 1818.

"My dear Wynn,

"I was truly glad to hear of your daughter's recovery. I have been in a storm at sea, in a Spanish vessel, and the feeling, when the weather had so sensibly abated that the danger was over, is the only one I can compare with that which is felt in a case like yours upon the first assurance that the disease is giving way. Those writers who speak of childhood or even youth as the happiest season of life, seem to me to speak with little reason. There is, indeed, an exemption from the cares of the world, and from those anxieties which shake us to the very centre. But as far as my own experience goes, when we are exempt from trials of this nature, our happiness, as we grow older, is more in quantity, and higher in degree as well as in kind. What hopes we have are no longer accompanied with uneasiness or restless desires. The way before us is no longer uncertain; we see to the end of our journey; the acquisition of knowledge becomes more and more delightful, and the appetite for it may truly be said to grow with what it feeds on; and as we set our thoughts and hearts in order for another world, the prospect of that world becomes a source of deeper delight than anything which this

could administer to an immortal spirit. On the other hand, we are vulnerable out of ourselves, and you and I are reaching that time of life in which the losses which we have to endure will be so many amputations. The wound may heal, but the mutilation will always be felt. Not to speak of more vital affections, the loss of a familiar friend casts a shade over the remembrance of everything in which he was associated. You and I, my dear Wynn, are less to each other than we were in old times. Years pass away without our meeting; nor is it at all likely that we shall ever again see as much of each other in this world as we used to do in the course of one short term at Oxford. And yet he who is to be the survivor will one day feel how much we are to each other, even now, — when all those recollections which he now loves to invite and dwell upon will come to him like spectres.

"However, I hope that both you and I may be permitted to do something more before we are removed. And I cannot but hope that you will take upon yourself a conspicuous part in that reformation of the criminal laws, which cannot much longer be delayed. Nor do I know any one (setting all personal feelings aside) by whom it could so fitly be taken up. That speech of Frankland's was perfectly conclusive to my mind: but that alterations are necessary is certain, and the late trials for forgery show that they must be made, even now, with a bad grace, but with a worse the longer they are delayed. To me it has long appeared a safe proposition that the punishment of death is misapplied whenever the

general feeling that it creates is that of compassion for the criminal. A man and woman were executed for coining at the same time with Patch. Now what an offence was this to the common sense of justice! There is undoubtedly at this time a settled purpose among the revolutionists to bring the laws into contempt and hatred, and to a very great degree it has succeeded. The more reason, therefore, that where they are plainly objectionable they should be revised. But for the principle of making the sentence in all cases proportionate to the crime, and the execution certain, nothing in my judgment can be more impracticable, and I am sure nothing could lead to greater injustice than an attempt to effect it. The sentence must be sufficient for the highest degree of the crime, and a discretionary power allowed for tempering it to the level of the lowest. You would take up the matter with a due sense of its difficulty, and with every possible advantage of character, both in the House and in the country; and moreover the disposition of the ministers ought to be, and I really should suppose would be, in your favour. . . . .

"God bless you, my dear Wynn!

R. S."

CHAPTER XXIV.

NERVOUS FEELINGS. — ANXIETIES FOR THE FUTURE. — RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY JOURNEYS. — PRUDENCE OF ANTICIPATING POPULAR OPINION. — ODE ON THE QUEEN'S DEATH. — HAYDON. — WORDSWORTH. — LIFE OF WESLEY. — HOME POLITICS. — SWITZERLAND. — CRITICISMS ON A VOLUME OF POEMS BY MR. E. ELLIOTT. — BIRTH OF A SON. — HISTORY OF BRAZIL. — RISING POETS. — WAVERLEY NOVELS. — REASONS FOR DECLINING TO ATTEND THE WESTMINSTER MEETING. — COLLEGE RECOLLECTIONS. — RELIGION NECESSARY TO HAPPINESS. — NOTICES OF THE LAKE COUNTRY. — MR. WORDSWORTH'S "WAGGONER." — ADVISES ALLAN CUNNINGHAM ON LITERARY PURSUITS. — LORD BYRON'S HOSTILITY. — PROBABLE RECEPTION OF THE HISTORY OF BRAZIL. — CRABBE'S POEMS. — PETER ROBERTS. — LITERARY EMPLOYMENTS. — COLONISATION NECESSARY. — TOUR IN SCOTLAND. — DESIRABLENESS OF MEN OF MATURE YEARS TAKING HOLY ORDERS. — JOHN MORGAN IN DIFFICULTIES. — PROJECTED JOURNEY. — 1818—1819.

THE following is the letter before alluded to, as showing so strong a contrast to that freedom from anxiety and confidence in himself, which seemed to possess him at the time he refused the offer of Librarian to the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh. It is, indeed, no matter of wonder that, sensitively constituted as he was by nature, and compelled to such incessant mental occupation, such feelings should at times come over him; and we may see in them the sad forewarnings of that calamity by which his latest years were darkened.

But if he was not altogether what he so well describes the stern American leader to have been —

"Lord of his own resolves, of his own heart absolute master;" *

he certainly possessed no common power over himself; and he here well describes how needful was its exercise.

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Dec. 5. 1818.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"It is, between ourselves, a matter of surprise to me that this bodily machine of mine should have continued its operations with so few derangements, knowing, as I well do, its excessive susceptibility to many deranging causes. The nitrous oxyde approaches nearer to the notion of a *neurometer* than anything which perhaps could be devised; and I was acted upon by a far smaller dose than any person upon whom it had ever been tried, when I was in the habit of taking it. If I did not vary my pursuits and carry on many works of a totally different kind at once, I should soon be incapable of proceeding with any, so surely does it disturb my sleep and affect my dreams if I dwell upon one with any continuous attention. The truth is, that though some persons, whose knowledge of me is scarcely skin-deep, suppose I have no nerves, because I have great self-

* Vision of Judgment.

control as far as regards the surface; if it were not for great self-management, and what may be called a strict intellectual regimen, I should very soon be in a deplorable state of what is called nervous disease, and this would have been the case any time during the last twenty years.

"Thank God I am well at present, and well employed: Brazil and Wesley both at the press; a paper for the Quarterly Review in hand, and Oliver Newman now seriously resumed; while for light reading I am going through South's Sermons and the whole British and Irish part of the Acta Sanctorum.

"In the MSS. of Wesley, which passed through Gifford's hands while you were absent, there was a chapter which I wished you to have seen, because both in matter and manner it is among the best things I have written. It contained a view of our religious history down to the accession of the present family; not the facts but the spirit of the history. You will be pleased to see how I have relieved and diversified this book, which will be as elaborate as a Dutchman's work and as entertaining as a Frenchman's.

"I want now to provide against that inability which may any day or any moment overtake me. You are not mistaken in thinking that the last three years have considerably changed me; the outside remains pretty much the same, but it is far otherwise within. If hitherto the day has been sufficient for the labour, as well as the labour for the day, I now feel that it cannot always, and possibly may not

long be so. Were I dead there would be a provision for my family, which though not such as I yet hope to make it, would yet be a respectable one. But if I were unable to work, half my ways and means would instantly be cut off, and the whole of them are needed. Such thoughts did not use to visit me. My spirits retain their strength, but they have lost their buoyancy, and that for ever. I should be the better for travelling, but that is not in my power. At present the press fetters me, and if it did not, I could not afford to be spending money when I ought to be earning it. But I shall work the harder to enable me so to do.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Chauncey H. Townshend, Esq.

"Keswick, Dec. 10. 1818.

"My dear Chauncey,

"You made the best use of your misfortune at Kendal. The most completely comfortless hours in a man's life (abstracted from all real calamity) are those which he spends alone at an inn, waiting for a chance in a stage-coach. Time thus spent is so thoroughly disagreeable that the act of getting into the coach, and resigning yourself to be jumbled for four-and-twenty or eight-and-forty hours, like a mass of inert matter, becomes a positive pleasure. I always prepare myself for such occasions with some closely-printed pocket volume, of pregnant matter, for which I should not be likely to afford leisure at

other times. Erasmus' Colloquies stood me in good stead for more than one journey; Sir Thomas More's Utopia for another. When I was a school-boy I loved travelling, and enjoyed it, indeed, as long as I could say *omnia mea mecum;* that is, as long as I could carry with me an undivided heart and mind, and had nothing to make me wish myself in any other place than where I was. The journey from London to Bristol at the holidays was one of the pleasures which I looked for at breaking up; and I used generally to travel by day rather than by night, that I might lose none of the expected enjoyment. I wish I had kept a journal of all those journeys; for some of the company into which I have fallen might have furnished matter worthy of preservation. Once I travelled with the keeper of a crimping-house at Charing Cross, who, meeting with an old acquaintance in the coach, told him his profession while I was supposed to be asleep in the corner. Once I formed an acquaintance with a young deaf and dumb man, and learnt to converse with him. Once I fell in with a man of a race now nearly extinct,—a village mathematician; a self-taught, iron-headed man, who, if he had been lucky enough to have been well educated and entered at Trinity Hall, might have been first wrangler, and perhaps have gone as near towards doubling the cube as any of the votaries of Mathesis. (Pray write a sonnet to that said personage.) This man was pleased with me, and (perhaps because I was flattered by perceiving it) I have a distinct recollection of his remarkable countenance after an interval of nearly thirty years. He laboured very

hard to give me a love of his own favourite pursuit; and it is my own fault that I cannot now take the altitude of a church tower by the help of a cocked hat, as he taught me, or would have taught, if I could have retained such lessons.

"It is an act, not absolutely of heroic virtue, but of something like it, my writing to you this evening. Four successive evenings I have been prevented from carrying into effect the fixed purpose of so doing; first by the General's dropping in to pass the last evening with me before his departure, then by letters which required reply without delay. And this afternoon, just before the bell rang for tea, a huge parcel was brought up stairs, containing twenty volumes of the Gospel Magazine; in which dunghill I am now about to rake for wheat, or for wild oats, if you like the metaphor better.

Yours affectionately,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Dec. 11. 1818.

"My dear R.,

"\. . . . . .

I sometimes try to persuade myself that mine is a Turkish sort of constitution, and that exercise and out-of-door air are not needful for its well-being; but the body begins to require better management than it did; it will not take care of itself so well as it did twenty years ago, and I need not look in the

glass for a memento that I have begun the down-hill part of my journey. So be it. There is so much for my heart, and hope, and curiosity at the end of the stage, that if I thought only of myself in this world I should wish that I was there.

"It is a strange folly, a fatality, that men in power will not see the prudence of anticipating public feeling sometimes, and doing things with a grace for the sake of popularity, which must be done with ignominy upon compulsion. For instance, in Lord Cochrane's affair, it was wrong to condemn him to the pillory; but if that part of the sentence had been annulled before popular opinion was expressed, the Prince would have gained credit, instead of being supposed to yield to the newspapers. There is another case in the suicide laws. . . . And again in the matter of forgery; the law must be altered, and this not from the will of the legislature, but by the will of the London juries! The juries, however, if they go on in their present course, will do more than this, — they will prove that the very institution of juries, on which we have prided ourselves so long, is inconsistent not only with common sense, but with the safety of society and the security of Government. I wish when the question of forgery comes before the House (as it surely must do), that something may be said and done also for restoring that part of the system which makes the jurymen punishable for a false verdict.

"I have written shortly about the Copyright question for the Q. R., and put in a word, without any hope of a change in my time, upon the absurd in-

justice of the existing laws. My own case hereafter will plead more strongly against them than it is in my power to do now, as, according to all appearances, my copyrights will be much more valuable property after my death than they have ever yet proved.

"God bless you!

Always and affectionately yours,

R. S."

To John Rickman, Esq.

"Jan. 1. 1818.

"My dear R.,

"Many happy new years to you and yours, and may you go on well however the world goes. Go as it may, it is some satisfaction to think that it will not be the worse for anything that you and I have done in it. And it is to be hoped that our work is not done yet. I have a strong hope that something may be effected in our old scheme about the reformed convents, and that would be as great a step towards amending the condition of educated women as the establishment of savings' banks has been for bettering the state of the lower classes.

"I am reading Coxe's Memoirs of Marlborough, by far the best of his books. Marlborough appears to more advantage in all respects the more he is known. The reading is not gratuitous, for I am to review the work.

"Longman sent me Müller's Universal History, a surprising work, though I find him deficient in

knowledge and in views in the points where I am competent to be his judge. Have you seen Fearon's Sketches of America? It is very amusing to see a man who hates all the institutions of his own country compelled to own that every thing is worse in America, and groan while he makes the confession; too honest to conceal the truth, and yet bringing it up as if it were got at by means of emetic tartar, sorely against his stomach. I wish I were not too busy to write a careful review of this book.

"Did I tell you concerning Morris Birbeck, that he sunk 8000*l.* by a speculation in soap, and was Lord Onslow's tenant, which said Lord Onslow indited upon him this epigram: —

'Had you ta'en less delight in
Political writing,
Nor to vain speculations given scope,
You'd have paid me your rent,
Your time better spent,
And besides — washed your hands of the soap.'

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Mr. Ebenezer Elliott, Jun.

"Keswick, Jan. 30. 1819.

"My dear Sir,

"I received your little volume yesterday.* You may rest assured that you ascribed the condemnation in the Monthly Magazine to the true cause.

"There are abundant evidences of power in it;

* This volume of poems was entitled "Night."

its merits are of the most striking kind; and its defects are not less striking, both in plan and execution. The stories had better each have been separate, than linked together without any natural or necessary connection. The first consists of such grossly improbable circumstances, that it is altogether as incredible as if it were a supernatural tale. It is also a hateful story, presenting nothing but what is painful. In the second, the machinery is preposterously disproportionate to the occasion. And in all the poems there is too much ornament, too much effort, too much labour. You think you can never embroider your drapery too much; and that the more gold and jewels you can fasten on it the richer the effect must be. The consequence is, that there is a total want of what painters call breadth and keeping, and, therefore, the effect is lost.

"You will say that this opinion proceeds from the erroneous system which I have pursued in my own Writings, and which has prevented my poems from obtaining the same popularity as those of Lord Byron and Walter Scott. But look at those poets whose rank is established beyond all controversy. Look at the Homeric poems; at Virgil, Dante, Ariosto, Milton. Do not ask yourself what are the causes of the failure or success of your contemporaries; their failure or success is not determined yet, — a generation, an age, a century will not suffice to determine it. But see what it is by which those poets have rendered themselves immortal: who, after the lapse of centuries, are living and acting upon us still.

"I should not speak to you thus plainly of your fault,—the sin by which the angels fell,—if it were not for the great powers which are thus injured by misdirection. And it is for the sake of bearing testimony to those powers, and thereby endeavouring to lessen the effect which a rascally criticism may have produced upon your feelings, that I am now writing. That criticism may give you pain, because it may affect the minds of persons not very capable of forming an opinion for themselves, who may either be glad to be encouraged in despising your production, or grieved at seeing it condemned. But in any other point of view it is unworthy of a moment's thought.

"You may do great things if you will cease to attempt so much; if you will learn to proportion your figures to your canvas. Cease to overlay your foregrounds with florid ornaments, and be persuaded that in a poem as well as in a picture there must be lights and shades; that the general effect can never be good unless the subordinate parts are kept down, and that the brilliancy of one part is brought out and heightened by the repose of the other. One word more.

"With your powers of thought and language, you need not seek to produce effect by monstrous incidents or exaggerated characters. These drams have been administered so often that they are beginning to lose their effect. And it is to truth and nature that we must come at last. Trust to them, and they will bear you through. You are now

squandering wealth with which, if it be properly disposed, you may purchase golden reputation.

"But you must reverence your elders more, and be less eager for immediate applause.

"You will judge of the sincerity of my praise by the frankness of my censure.

"Farewell! And believe me,

Yours faithfully,

R. SOUTHEY."

To Walter Scott, Esq.

"March 11. 1819.

"My dear Scott,

"My conscience will not let me direct a letter to your care without directing one to yourself by the same post.

"A great event has happened to me within this fortnight, — the birth of a child, after an interval of nearly seven years, and that child a son. This was a chance to which I looked rather with dread than with hope, after having seen the flower of my earthly hopes and happiness cut down. But it is well that these things are not in our own disposal; and without building upon so frail a tenure as an infant's life, or indulging in any vain dreams of what may be, I am thankful for him now that he is come.

"You would have heard from me ere long, even if Mr. Ticknor* had not given a spur to my tardy

* The accomplished author of "The History of Spanish Literature." Murray, 1850.

intentions. I should soon have written to say that you will shortly receive the concluding volume of my History of Brazil, for I am now drawing fast toward the close of that long labour. This volume has less of the kite and crow warfare than its predecessors, and is rich in information of various kinds, which has never till now come before the public in any shape. Indeed, when I think of the materials from which it has been composed, and how completely during great part of my course I have been without either chart or pilot to direct me, I look back with wonder upon what I have accomplished. I go to London in about seven weeks from this time, and as soon as I return the Peninsular War will be sent to press.

"Our successors (for you and I are now old enough in authorship to use this term) are falling into the same faults as the Roman poets after the Augustan age, and the Italians after the golden season of their poetry. They are overlabouring their productions, and overloading them with ornament, so that all parts are equally prominent, everywhere glare and glitter, and no keeping and no repose. Henry Milman has spoilt his Samor in this way. It is full of power and of beauty, but too full of them. There is another striking example in a little volume called Night, where some of the most uncouth stories imaginable are told in a strain of continued tip-toe effort; and you are vexed to see such uncommon talents so oddly applied, and such Herculean strength wasted in preposterous exertions. The author's name is Elliott, a self-taught man, in business

(the iron trade, I believe) at Rotherham. He sends play after play to the London theatres, and has always that sort of refusal which gives him encouragement to try another. Sheridan said of one of them that it was "a comical tragedy, but he did not know any man who could have written such a one." I have given him good advice, which he takes as it is meant, and something may come of him yet.

"It was reported that you were about to bring forth a play, and I was greatly in hopes it might be true; for I am verily persuaded that in this course you would run as brilliant a career as you have already done in narrative, both in prose and rhyme, for as for believing that you have a double in the field,—not I! Those same powers would be equally certain of success in the drama; and were you to give them a dramatic direction, and reign for a third seven years upon the stage, you would stand alone in literary history. Indeed, already I believe that no man ever afforded so much delight to so great a number of his contemporaries in this or any other country.

"God bless you, my dear Scott! Remember me to Mrs. S. and your daughter, and believe me,

Ever yours affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, April 9. 1819.

"My dear G.,

"\. . . . . .

Even if I were in town, I certainly should not go to the Westminster meeting. The chance of seeing some half dozen men with whom I might exchange a few words of recognition and shake hands, would not make amends for the melancholy recollection of those whom I loved better and used to see at the same time. Moreover, I have an absolute hatred of all public meetings, and would rather go without a dinner than eat it in such an assembly. I went to the Academy's dinner for the sake of facing William Smith; but I go to no more such.

"My wish will be to see as much of my friends as I can, and as little of my acquaintance; and, therefore, I mean to refuse all such invitations as would throw me among strangers or indifferent persons, except in cases where I owe something for civilities received. For I do not want to see Lions, and still less do I desire to be exhibited as one, and go where I should be expected to open my mouth and roar.

"There is another reason* why I would not at-

* Of your reasons for declining to be present at the Westminster meeting, one class I do not approve, and the other I do not admit. How it will look that you go to it after Vincent's death, never having gone to it during his life, is no question, for it will have no look at all, for nobody will look at it. This is just one of the feelings that a man has when *he knows* that he has a hole in his stocking, and fancies, of course, that the attention of all the company is attracted to it. The last

tend the Westminster meeting. As I never went during Vincent's life, it might seem as if I felt myself at liberty to go there now, and had not done so before. Whereas, so far was I from harbouring any resentment towards Vincent, or any unpleasant feeling of any kind, that I have long and with good reason looked upon my expulsion from Westminster as having been in its consequences the luckiest event of my life; and for many years I should have been glad to have met the old man, in full persuasion that he would have not been sorry to have met with me.

"I had a beautiful letter* yesterday from poor Walter Scott, who has been on the very brink of the grave, and feels how likely it is that any day or hour may send him there. If he is sufficiently recovered I shall meet him in London; but his health is broken beyond all prospect or hope of complete recovery. He entreats me to take warning, and beware of overworking myself. I am afraid no person ever took that advice who stood in need of it; and still more afraid that the surest way of bringing on the anticipated evil would be to apprehend it. But I believe that I manage myself well by frequent change of employment, frequent idling, and keeping my mind as free as I can from any strong excitement.

"God bless you, my dear Grosvenor!

R. S."

time I ever saw the old dean, he spoke of you with kindness and approbation, and, I thought, with pride. . . . If I were to have you here on that day, I should tie a string round your leg and pull you in an opposite direction to that in which I meant to drive you. Swallow that and digest it." — *G. C. B. to R. S., April* 12. 1819

* See Life of Sir Walter Scott, 2d edit. vol. vi. p. 41.

To the Rev. Nicholas Lightfoot.

"Keswick, May 29. 1819.

"My dear Lightfoot,

"So long a time had elapsed without my hearing from you, or by any accident of you, that I began to fear what might have been the cause of this long silence, and was almost afraid to inquire. I am very sorry that Mr. Bush did not make use of your name when he was at Keswick last summer; he could have brought with him no better introduction, and I have always time to perform offices of attention and hospitality to those who are entitled to them. He left a good impression here as an excellent preacher; indeed, I have seldom or never heard a more judicious one. The account which he gave you of my way of life is not altogether correct. I have no allotted quantum of exercise, but, as at Oxford, sometimes go a long while without any, and sometimes take walks that would try the mettle of a younger man. And a great deal more of my time is employed in reading than in writing; if it were not, what I write would be of very little value. But that I am a close student is very true, and such I shall continue to be as long as my eyes and other faculties last.

"You must apply in time if you design to place your son at Oriel; it is now no easy matter to obtain admission there, nor indeed at any college which is in good reputation. I almost wonder that you do not give the preference to old Balliol for the sake of old times, now that the college has fairly

obtained a new character, and is no longer the seat of drunkenness, raffery and indiscipline, as it was in our days. It is even doubtful whether, if I were an undergraduate now, I should be permitted to try my skill in throwing stones for the pleasure of hearing them knock against your door. Seriously, however, altered as the college is, there would be an advantage in sending your son there, where you have left a good name and a good example. Poor Thomas Howe* I believe led but a melancholy life after he left college; without neighbours, without a family, without a pursuit, he must have felt dismally the want of his old routine, and sorely have missed his pupils, the chapel bells, and the Common Room. A monk is much happier than an old fellow of a college who retires to reside upon a country living. And how much happier are you at this day, with all the tedium which your daily occupation must bring with it, than if you had obtained a fellowship, and then waited twenty years for preferment.

"Believe me, my dear Lightfoot, yours affectionately as in old times,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

The following letter I found copied among my father's papers, but without name or date; it evidently, however, belongs to this period, and is, I think, worthy of insertion here, as showing his aptness to

* His college tutor. See vol. i. p. 215.

suggest religious thoughts whenever an occasion presented itself, and the judicious manner in which he does so.

" Keswick, 1819.

" I have behaved very ill in having so long delayed replying to a lady's letter, and that letter, too, one which deserved a ready and a thankful acknowledgment. Forgive me. I am not wont to be thus discourteous; and in the present instance there is some excuse for it, for your letter arrived at a time of much anxiety. My wife had a three months' illness after the birth of a son; and during that time it was as much as I could do to force my attention to business which could not be left undone. My heart was not enough at ease to be addressing you.

" The number of unknown correspondents whom I have had in my time does not lessen my desire of seeing you, nor abate that curiosity which men feel as strongly as women; except that they have not the same leisure for thinking of it.

. . . . . .

" You tell me that the whole of your happiness is dependent upon literary pursuits and recreations. It is well that you have these resources; but were we near each other, and were I to like you half as well upon a nearer acquaintance, as it appears to me at this distance that I should do, I think that when I had won your confidence I should venture to tell you that something better than literature is necessary for happiness.

"To confess the truth, one of the causes which have prevented me from writing to you earlier, has been the wish and half intention of touching upon this theme; checked by that sort of hesitation which sometimes, (and that too often) prevents us from doing what we ought for fear of singularity. That you are a woman of talents I know; and I think you would not have given me the preference over more fashionable poets, if there had not been something in the general character of my writings which accorded with your feelings, and which you did not find in theirs. But you have lived in high life; you move in circles of gaiety and fashion; and though you sympathise with me when I express myself in verse, it is more than probable that the direct mention of religion may startle you, as something unwarranted as well as unexpected.

"I am no Methodist, no sectarian, no bigot, no formalist. My natural spirits are buoyant beyond those of any person, man, woman, or child, whom I ever saw or heard of. They have had enough to try them and to sink them, and it is by religion alone that I shall be enabled to pass the remainder of my days in cheerfulness and in hope. Without hope there can be no happiness; and without religion no hope but such as deceives us. Your heart seems to want an object; and this would satisfy it: and if it has been wounded, this, and this only, is the cure.

"Are you displeased with this freedom? Or do you receive it as a proof that I am disposed to become something more than a mere literary ac-

quaintance; and that you have made me feel an interest concerning you which an ordinary person could not have excited?

. . . . . .

"Scott is very ill. He suffers dreadfully; but bears his sufferings with admirable equanimity, and looks on to the probable termination of them with calmness and well-founded hope. God grant that he may recover! He is a noble and generous-hearted creature, whose like we shall not look upon again."

To Wade Browne, Esq.

"Keswick, June 15. 1819.

"My dear Sir,

"When you hear that my journey to the south must be postponed till the fall of the leaf, I fear you will think me infirm of purpose, and as little to be depended on as the wind and weather in this our mutable climate. Its cause, however, lies rather in a good obstinate principle of perseverance, than in any fickleness of temper. This history, of which the hundredth sheet is now upon my desk, will confine me here so far into the summer (beyond all previous or possible calculation), that if I went into the south as soon as it is completed, I should be under the necessity of shortening my stay there, and leaving part of my business undone, in order to return in time for a long-standing engagement, which in the autumn will take me into the Highlands. All things duly considered, it seemed best to put off my journey

to London till November, by which time all my running accounts with the press will be settled.

. . . . . .

"Cuthbert, who is now four months old, is beginning to serve me as well as his sisters for a plaything. The country is in its full beauty at this time; perhaps in greater than I may ever again see it, for it is reported that the woods on Castelet are condemned to come down next year; this, if it be true, is the greatest loss that Keswick could possibly sustain, and in no place will the loss be more conspicuous than from the room wherein I am now writing. But this neighbourhood has suffered much from the axe since you were here.* The woods about Lodore are gone; so are those under Castle-Crag; so is the little knot of fir trees on the way to church, which were so placed as to make one of the features of the vale; and worst of all, so is that beautiful birch grove on the side of the lake between Barrow and Lodore. Not a single sucker is springing up in its place; and, indeed, it would require a full century before another grove could be reared which would equal it in beauty. It is lucky that they cannot level the mountains nor drain the lake; but they are doing what they can to lower it, and have succeeded so far as to render all the old landing-places useless. If the effect of this should be to drain the marshy land at the head and foot of the lake, without leaving as much more swamp uncovered, it will do good rather than harm. The

* See the beginning of Colloquy X., On the Progress and Prospects of Society.

islands, however, will be deformed for a few years by the naked belt which is thus made around them.

"Two cases so extraordinary as to appear almost incredible occurred in the course of last month in this country. A child four years old wandered from its mother, who was cutting peat among the Ennerdale Mountains, and after four days was found alive. A man upon the Eskdale Fells was found after eighteen, still living, and able to wave his hand as a signal, by which he was discovered. He had fallen in a fit, and was incapable of moving when he recovered his senses; in both cases there was water close by, by which life was preserved. The child is doing well. Of the man I have heard nothing since the day after he was found, when Wordsworth was in Eskdale, and learnt the story; at that time there seemed to be no apprehension that his life was in danger.

"I think you will be pleased with Wordsworth's 'Waggoner,' if it were only for the line of road* which it describes. The master of the waggon was my poor landlord Jackson; and the cause of his exchanging it for the one-horse-cart was just as is represented in the poem; nobody but Benjamin could manage it upon these hills, and Benjamin could not resist the temptations by the way-side.

. . . . . .

Believe me, my dear Sir,
Yours very truly,
ROBERT SOUTHEY."

* The road from Keswick to Ambleside.

The following letter to Allan Cunningham, in reply to one which sought for an opinion as to the publication of his poem of the Maid of Eloar, will be read with interest, as another proof among the many my father's letters afford, of his frank sincerity as an adviser; and it may also well serve as a type of the kind of counsel few young authors will do wrong in laying to heart. It is interesting to add, that Mr. Cunningham's son (Peter Cunningham, Esq.) informs me that this letter "confirmed his father in his love for literature as an idle trade, and in his situation at Chantrey's as a means of livelihood."

Other letters will show that the acquaintance thus commenced continued through life; and that it was productive on both sides of a sincere esteem and a very friendly regard.

To Allan Cunningham, Esq.

"Keswick, July 10. 1819.

"It is no easy task, Mr. Cunningham, to answer a letter like yours. I am unwilling to excite hopes which are but too likely to end in severe disappointment; and equally unwilling to say anything which might depress a noble spirit. The frankest course is the best. Patience and prudence are among the characteristic virtues of your countrymen: the progress which you have made proves that you possess the first in no common degree; and if you possess a good share of the latter also, what I have to say will neither be discouraging nor useless.

"Your poem * contains incurable defects, but not such as proceed from any want of power. You have aimed at too much, and failed in the structure of the story, the incidents of which are impossible for the time and place in which they are laid. This is of little consequence if you are of the right mould. Your language has an original stamp, and could you succeed in the choice of subjects, — I dare not say that you would obtain the applause of which you are ambitious, — but I believe you would deserve it.

"Let me make myself clearly understood. In poetry, as in painting, and music, and architecture, it is far more difficult to design than to execute. A long tale should be everywhere consistent, and everywhere perspicuous. The incidents should depend upon each other, and the event appear like the necessary result, so that no sense of improbability in any part of the narration should force itself upon the hearer. I advise you to exercise yourself in shorter tales, — and these have the advantage of being more to the taste of the age.

"But whatever you do, be prepared for disappointment. Crowded as this age is with candidates for public favour, you will find it infinitely difficult to obtain a hearing. The booksellers look blank upon poetry, for they know that not one volume of poems out of a hundred pays its expenses; and they know also how much more the immediate success of a book depends upon accidental circumstances than upon its intrinsic merit. They of course must look to the chance of profit as the main object. If this

* The Maid of Eloar as originally written.

first difficulty be overcome, the public read only what it is the fashion to read; and for one competent critic — one equitable one — there are twenty coxcombs who would blast the fortunes of an author for the sake of raising a laugh at his expense.

"Do not, therefore, rely upon your poetical powers as a means of bettering your worldly condition. This is the first and most momentous advice which I would impress upon you. If you can be contented to pursue poetry for its own reward, for the delight which you find in the pursuit, go on and prosper. But never let it tempt you to neglect the daily duties of life, never trust to it for profit, as you value your independence and your peace. To trust to it for support is misery and ruin. On the other hand, if you have that consciousness of strength that you can be satisfied with the expectation of fame, though you should never live to enjoy it, I know not how you can be more happily employed than in exercising the powers with which you are gifted. And if you like my advice well enough to wish for it on any future occasion, write to me freely; I would gladly be of use to you if I could.

Farewell, and believe me,

Your sincere well-wisher,

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

To C. H. Townshend, Esq.

"Keswick, July 20. 1819.

"My dear Chauncey,

". . . . . .

I have not seen more of Don Juan than some extracts in a country paper, wherein my own name is coupled with a rhyme which I thought would never be used by any person but myself when kissing one of my own children in infancy, and talking nonsense to it, which, whatever you may think of it at present as an exercise for the intellect, I hope you will one day have occasion to practise, and you will then find out its many and various excellencies. I do not yet know whether the printed poem is introduced by a dedication * to me, in a most hostile strain, which came over with it, or whether the person who has done Lord Byron the irreparable injury of sending into the world what his own publisher and his friends endeavoured, for his sake, to keep out

* This dedication, which is sufficiently scurrilous, is prefixed to the poem in the Collected Edition of Lord Byron's Life and Works, with the following note by the Editor: —

"This Dedication was suppressed in 1815 with Lord Byron's reluctant consent; but shortly after his death its existence became notorious, in consequence of an article in the Westminster Review, generally ascribed to Sir John Hobhouse; and for several years the verses have been selling in the streets as a broadside. It could, therefore, serve no purpose to exclude them on this occasion." — *Byron's Life and Works*, vol. xv. 101.

The editor seems by this to have felt some slight compunction at publishing this Dedication; but he publishes for the first time another attack upon my father a hundred-fold worse than this, contained in some "Observations upon an Article in Blackwood's Magazine," without any apology. This subject, however, will more properly fall to be noticed in the next volume.

of it, has suppressed it. This is to me a matter of perfect unconcern. Lord Byron attacked me when he ran amuck as a satirist; he found it convenient to express himself sorry for that satire, and to have such of the persons told so whom he had assailed in it as he was likely to fall in with in society; myself among the number. I met him three or four times on courteous terms, and saw enough of him to feel that he was rather to be shunned than sought. Attack me as he will, I shall not go out of my course to break a spear with him; but if it comes in my way to give him a passing touch, it will be one that will leave a scar.

"The third and last volume of my Opus Majus will be published in two or three weeks; they are printing the index. What effect will it produce? It may tend to sober the anticipations of a young author to hear the faithful anticipations of an experienced one. None that will be heard of. It will move quietly from the publishers to a certain number of reading societies, and a certain number of private libraries; enough between them to pay the expenses of the publication. Some twenty persons in England, and some half dozen in Portugal and Brazil will peruse it with avidity and delight. Some fifty, perhaps, will buy the book because of the subject, and ask one another if they have had time to look into it. A few of those who know me and love me, will wish that I had employed the time which it has cost in writing poems; and some of those who do not know me, will marvel that in the ripe season of my mind, and in the summer of reputation, I should have

bestowed so large a portion of life upon a work which could not possibly become either popular or profitable. And is this all? No, Chauncey Townshend, it is not all; and I should deal insincerely with you if I did not add, that ages hence it will be found among those works which are not destined to perish; and secure for me a remembrance in other countries as well as in my own; that it will be read in the heart of S. America, and communicate to the Brazilians, when they shall have become a powerful nation, much of their own history which would otherwise have perished; and be to them what the work of Herodotus is to Europe. You will agree with me on one point at least, — that I am in no danger of feeling disappointment. But you will agree also that no man can deserve or obtain the applause of after ages, if he is too solicitous about that of his own.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To C. W. W. Wynn, Esq., M. P.

"Keswick, July 22. 1819.

"My dear Wynn,

"I give you joy of your escape from late hours in the House of Commons and a summer in London. I congratulate you upon exchanging gas lights for the moon and stars, and the pavement of Whitehall for your noble terraces, which I never can think of without pleasure, because they are beautiful in themselves, and carry one back to old times, — any-

thing which does this does one good. Were I to build a mansion with the means of Lord Lonsdale or Lord Grosvenor, I would certainly make hanging gardens if the ground permitted it. They have a character of grandeur and of permanence, without which nothing can be truly grand, and they are fine even in decay.

"I will come to you for a day or two, on my way to town, about the beginning of December. This will be a flying visit; but one of these summers or autumns, I should like dearly to finish the projected circuit with you which Mr. Curry cut short in the year 1801, when he sent for the most unfit man in the world to be his secretary, having nothing whatever for him to do; and many years must not be suffered to go by. My next birthday will be the forty-fifth, and every year will take something from the inclination to move, and perhaps also from the power of enjoyment.

"I was not disappointed with Crabbe's Tales. He is a decided mannerist, but so are all original writers in all ages; nor is it possible for a poet to avoid it if he writes much in the same key and upon the same class of subjects. Crabbe's poems will have a great and lasting value as pictures of domestic life, elucidating the moral history of these times, — times which must hold a most conspicuous place in history. He knows his own powers, and never aims above his reach. In this age, when the public are greedy for novelties, and abundantly supplied with them, an author may easily commit the error of giving them too much of the same kind

of thing. But this will not be thought a fault hereafter, when the kind is good, or the thing good of its kind.

"Peter Roberts is a great loss. I begin almost to despair of ever seeing more of the Mabinogion. And yet if some competent Welshman could be found to edit it carefully, with as literal a version as possible, I am sure it might be made worth his while by a subscription, printing a small edition at a high price, perhaps 200, at *5l. 5s.* I myself would gladly subscribe at that price per volume for such an edition of the whole of your genuine remains in prose and verse. Till some such collection is made, the 'gentlemen of Wales' ought to be prohibited from wearing a leek; aye, and interdicted from toasted cheese also. Your bards would have met with better usage if they had been Scotchmen.

"Shall we see some legislatorial attorneys sent to Newgate next session? or will the likely conviction of —— damp the appetite for rebellion which is at present so sharp set? I heard the other day of a rider explaining at one of the inns in this town how well the starving manufacturers at Manchester might be settled, by parcelling out the Chatsworth estate among them. The savings' banks will certainly prove a strong bulwark for property in general. And a great deal may be expected from a good system of colonisation; but it must necessarily be a long while before a good system can be formed (having no experience to guide us, for we have no knowledge how these things were managed by the ancients), and a long while also before the people can enter into it.

But that a regular and regulated emigration must become a part of our political system, is as certain as that nature shows us the necessity in every bee-hive. God bless you!

R. S."

A large portion of the autumn of this year was occupied in a Scottish tour, to which the following letter refers. Of this, as of all his journeys, he kept a minute and interesting journal, and the time and attention required for this purpose prevented him from writing any but short and hurried letters.

To Mr. Neville White.

"Keswick, Oct. 14. 1819.

'My dear Neville,

"You need not be warned to remember that all other considerations ought to give way to that of health. A man had better break a bone, or even lose a limb, than shake his nervous system. I, who never talk about my nerves (and am supposed to have none by persons who see as far into me as they do into a stone wall), know this. Take care of yourself; and if you find your spirits fail, put off your ordination, and shorten your hours of study; Lord Coke requires only eight hours for a student of the law; and Sir Matthew Hale thought six hours a day as much as any one could well bear; eight, he said, was too much.

"I was about seven weeks absent from home.

My route was from Edinburgh, Loch Katrine, and thence to Dunkeld and Dundee, up the east coast to Aberdeen, then to Banff and Inverness, and up the coast as far as Fleet Mound, which is within sight of the Ord of Caithness. We crossed from Dingwall to the Western Sea, returned to Inverness, took the line of the Caledonian Canal, crossed Ballachulish Ferry, and so to Inverary, Lochlomond, Glasgow, and home. This took in the greatest and best part of Scotland; and I saw it under the most favourable circumstances of weather and season, in the midst of a joyous harvest, and with the best opportunities for seeing everything, and obtaining information. I travelled with my old friend Mr. Rickman, and Mr. Telford, the former secretary, and the latter engineer to the two committees for the Caledonian Canal and the Highland Roads and Bridges. They also are the persons upon whom the appropriation of the money from the forfeited estates, for improving and creating harbours, has devolved. It was truly delightful to see how much Government has done and is doing for the improvement of that part of the kingdom, and how much, in consequence of that encouragement, the people are doing for themselves, which they would not have been able to do without it.

"So long an absence involves me, of course, in heavy arrears of business. I have to write half a volume of Wesley, and to prepare a long paper for the Q. R. (a Life of Marlborough) before I can set my face toward London. So I shall probably pass the months of February and March in and about

town. . . . A great many Cantabs have been summering here, where they go by the odd name of *Cathedrals.** Several of them brought introductions to me, and were good specimens of the rising generation. . . . God bless you, my dear Neville!

Yours affectionately,

R. SOUTHEY."

To Mr. Neville White.

"Keswick, Nov. 20. 1819.

"My dear Neville,

"I wish for your sake that the next few months were over — that you had passed your examination, and were quietly engaged in the regular course of parochial duty. *In labore quies* you know is the motto which I borrowed from my old predecessor Garibay. It is only in the discharge of duty that that deep and entire contentment which alone deserves to be called happiness is to be found, and you will go the way to find it. Were I a bishop, it would give me great satisfaction to lay hands upon a man like you, fitted as you are for the service of the altar by principle and disposition, almost beyond any man whom I have ever known. I have long regarded it as a great misfortune to the Church of England that men so seldom enter it at a mature age, when their characters are settled, when the glare of youth and hope has passed away; the things of the world are

* This was a Cumberland corruption of "Collegian."

seen in their true colours, and a calm and sober piety has taken possession of the heart. The Romanists have a great advantage over us in this.

"You asked me some time ago what I thought about the Manchester business. I look upon it as an unfortunate business, because it has enabled factious and foolish men to raise an outcry, and divert public attention from the great course of events to a mere accidental occurrence. That the meeting was unlawful, and in *terrorem populi* is to me perfectly clear. The magistrates committed an error in employing the yeomanry instead of the regulars to support the civil power; for the yeomanry, after bearing a great deal, lost their temper, which disciplined troops would not have done. The cause of this error is obviously that the magistrates thought it less obnoxious to employ that species of force than the troops, — a natural and pardonable mistake.

"It is no longer a question between Ins and Outs, nor between Whigs and Tories. It is between those who have something to lose, and those who have everything to gain by a dissolution of society. There may be bloodshed, and I am inclined to think there will before the Radicals are suppressed, but suppressed they will be for the time. What may be in store for us afterwards, who can tell? According to all human appearances, I should expect the worst, were it not for an abiding trust in Providence, by whose wise will even our follies are overruled.

"God bless you, my dear Neville!

Yours affectionately,

Robert Southey."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Dec. 3. 1819.

"My dear Grosvenor,

"... I must trespass on you farther, and request that you will seal up ten pounds, and leave it with Rickman, directed for Charles Lamb, Esq. from R. S. It is for poor John Morgan, whom you may remember some twenty years ago. This poor fellow, whom I knew at school, and whose mother has sometimes asked me to her table, when I should otherwise have gone without a dinner, was left with a fair fortune, from 10,000*l.* to 15,000*l.*, and without any vice or extravagance of his own he has lost the whole of it. A stroke of the palsy has utterly disabled him from doing anything to maintain himself; his wife, a good-natured, kind-hearted woman, whom I knew in her bloom, beauty, and prosperity, has accepted a situation as mistress of a charity-school, with a miserable salary of 40*l.* a-year; and this is all they have. In this pitiable case, Lamb and I have promised him ten pounds a-year each, as long as he lives. I have got five pounds a-year for him from an excellent fellow, whom you do not know, and who chooses on this occasion to be called A. B., and I have written to his Bristol friends, who are able to do more for him than we are, and on whom he has stronger personal claims; so that I hope we shall secure him the decencies of life. You will understand that this is an *explanation* to you, not an *application*. In a case of this kind, contributions become

a matter of feeling and duty among those who know the party, but strangers are not to be looked to.

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Dec. 20. 1819.

"My dear G.,

". . . . . .

I have been obliged to complain to Gifford of the mutilations which he has made in this paper. Pray recover the manuscript if you can; or, what would be better, the set of proof sheets. It is very provoking to have an historical paper of that kind, which, perhaps, no person in England but myself could have written, treated like a schoolboy's theme. Vexed however as I am, I have too much liking for Gifford to be angry with him, and have written to him in a manner which will prove this. . . . .

"Your godson, thank God, is going on well, and his father has nothing to complain of except indeed that he gets more praise than pudding. I had a letter last night which would amuse you. A certain H. Fisher, 'printer in ordinary to his Majesty,' of Caxton Printing Office, Liverpool, writes to bespeak of me a memoir of his present Majesty in one or two volumes octavo, pica type, longprimer notes, terms five guineas per sheet; and 'as the work will be sold principally among the middle class of society,

mechanics and tradespeople, the language, observations, *facts*, &c. &c. to suit them.' This is a fellow who employs hawkers to vend his books about the country. You see, Grosvenor, 'some have honour thrust upon them.'

"A Yankee also, who keeps an exhibition at Philadelphia, modestly asks me to send him my painted portrait, which, he says, is very worthy of a place in his collection. I am to have the pleasure of sitting for the picture and paying for it, and he is to show it in Yankee land, admittance so much!

"God bless you!

R. S."

To Grosvenor C. Bedford, Esq.

"Keswick, Dec. 22. 1819.

"My dear G.,

"Shields' note is a curiosity in its kind. It is so choicely phrased. But he is very civil, and I would willingly task myself rather than decline doing what he wishes me to do. If, however, by a general chorus he means one which is to recur at the end of every stanza, an ode must be framed with reference to such a burthen, or else it would be a burthen indeed; and indeed it would be impossible to fit one to stanzas of such different import as these. If, on the other hand, a concluding stanza is meant, more adapted for a 'flourish of trumpets, &c.' I am afraid

I cannot find one, but I will try.* The poem, as it now stands, is not a discreditable one; so far from it, indeed, that if I execute the scheme of my visionary dialogue (upon which my mind runs), I should introduce it — that upon the Princess's death, and a few pieces more to be written for the occasion, which would come in like the poems in Boethius.

"I thought I had explained to you my intentions about my journey. Being sufficiently master of my time, whether I set out a month sooner or later may be regulated solely by my own convenience, so that I return with the summer. I have to finish Wesley, which will be done in five weeks, taking it coolly and quietly. I have to finish the review of Marlborough, which will require three weeks. One of them is my mornings', the other my evenings' work. And if I am satisfied about the payment for my last paper, I shall recast the article upon the New Churches, and perhaps prepare one other also, in order to be beforehand with my ways and means for the spring and summer. But if there be any unhandsome treatment, I will not submit to it, but strike work as bravely as a radical weaver. In that case the time which would have been sold to the maximus homo of Albemarle Street will be far more worthily employed in finishing the Tale of Paraguay, which has proceeded more slowly than tortoise, sloth, or snail, but which, as far as it has gone, is good. Indeed, I

* "If I give the composer more trouble than poor Pye did, I am sorry for it, but I can no more write like Mr. Pye than Mr. Pye could write like me. His pyecrust and mine were not made of the same materials." — *R. S. to G. C. B.*

must finish it for publication in the ensuing year, or I shall not be able to keep my head above water. The sum of all this is, that I intend to work closely at home till the end of February, to pass a few days at Ludlow on my way to town, arrive in London about the second week of March, pass five or six weeks, partly at Streatham, partly in town; go to Sir H. Bunbury's for a few days, and perhaps stretch on into Norfolk for another week or ten days, and find my way back to Keswick by the end of May.

"A merry Christmas to you! God bless you!

R. S."

APPENDIX.

Extract from Mr. William Smith's Speech in the House of Commons, March 14. 1817.

"THE honourable member then adverted to that tergiversation of principle which the career of political individuals so often presented. He was far from supposing that a man who set out in life with the profession of certain sentiments, was bound to conclude life with them. He thought there might be many occasions in which a change of opinion, when that change was unattended by any personal advantages, when it appeared entirely disinterested, might be the result of sincere conviction. But what he most detested, what most filled him with disgust, was the settled, determined malignity of a renegado. He had read in a publication (the Quarterly Review), certainly entitled to much respect from its general literary excellences, though he differed from it in its principles, a passage alluding to the recent disturbances, which passage was as follows: — 'When the man of free opinions commences professor of moral and political philosophy for the benefit of the public, the fables of old credulity are then verified; his very breath becomes venomous, and every page which he sends abroad carries with it poison to the unsuspicious reader. We have shown, on a former occasion, how men of this description are acting upon the public, and have explained in what

manner a large part of the people have been prepared for the virus with which they inoculate them. The dangers arising from such a state of things are now fully apparent, and the designs of the incendiaries, which have for some years been proclaimed so plainly, that they ought, long ere this, to have been prevented, are now manifested by overt acts.'

" With the permission of the House, he would read an extract from a poem recently published, to which, he supposed, the above writer alluded (or, at least, to productions of a similar kind), as constituting a part of the virus with which the public mind had been infected : —

> ' My brethren, these are truths, and weighty ones :
> Ye are all equal ; Nature made ye so.
> Equality is your birthright ; when I gaze
> On the proud palace, and behold one man,
> In the blood-purpled robes of royalty,
> Feasting at ease, and lording over millions ;
> Then turn me to the hut of poverty,
> And see the wretched labourer, worn with toil,
> Divide his scanty morsel with his infants,
> I sicken, and, indignant at the sight,
> Blush for the patience of humanity.'

" He could read many other passages from these works equally strong on both sides ; but, if they were written by the same person, he should like to know from the honourable and learned gentleman opposite, why no proceedings had been instituted against the author. The poem *Wat Tyler* appeared to him to be the most seditious book that ever was written ; its author did not stop short of exhorting to general anarchy ; he vilified kings, priests, and nobles, and was for universal suffrage, and perfect equality. The Spencean plan could not be compared with it : that miserable and ridiculous performance did not attempt to employ any arguments ; but the author of Wat Tyler constantly appealed to the passions, and in a

style which the author, at that time, he supposed, conceived to be eloquence. Why, then, had not those who thought it necessary to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act taken notice of this poem? why had they not discovered the author of that seditious publication, and visited him with the penalties of the law? The work was not published secretly, it was not handed about in the darkness of night, but openly and publicly sold in the face of day. It was at this time to be purchased at almost every bookseller's shop in London: it was now exposed for sale in a bookseller's shop in Pall Mall, who styled himself bookseller to one or two of the Royal Family. He borrowed the copy from which he had just read the extract from an honourable friend of his, who bought it in the usual way; and, therefore, he supposed there could be no difficulty in finding out the party that wrote it. He had heard, that when a man of the name of Winterbottom was, some years ago, confined in Newgate, the manuscript had been sent to him, with liberty to print it for his own advantage, if he thought proper; but that man, it appeared, did not like to risk the publication, and, therefore, it was now first issued into the world. It must remain with the Government, and their legal advisers, to take what step they might deem most advisable to repress this seditious work, and punish its author. In bringing it under the notice of the House, he had merely spoken in defence of his constituents, who had been most grossly calumniated, and he thought that what he had said would go very far to exculpate them. But he wished to take this bull by the horns." — *See Hansard's Parl. Debates*, vol. xxxvii. p. 1088.

A Letter to William Smith, Esq., M.P., from Robert Southey, Esq.

" 1817.

" Sir,

" You are represented in the newspapers as having entered, during an important discussion in Parliament, into a comparison between certain passages in the Quarterly Review, and the opinions which were held by the author of Wat Tyler three and twenty years ago. It appears farther, according to the same authority, that the introduction of so strange a criticism, in so unfit a place, did not arise from the debate, but was a premeditated thing; that you had prepared yourself for it by stowing the Quarterly Review in one pocket, and Wat Tyler in the other; and that you deliberately stood up for the purpose of reviling an individual who was not present to vindicate himself, and in a place which afforded you protection.

" My name, indeed, was not mentioned; but that I was the person whom you intended, was notorious to all who heard you. For the impropriety of introducing such topics in such an assembly, it is farther stated that you received a well-merited rebuke from Mr. Wynn, who spoke on that occasion as much from his feelings towards one with whom he has lived in uninterrupted friendship for nearly thirty years, as from a sense of the respect which is due to Parliament. It is, however, proper that I should speak explicitly for myself. This was not necessary in regard to Mr. Brougham: he only carried the quarrels as well as the practices of the Edinburgh Review into the House of Commons. But as calumny, Sir, has not been your vocation, it may be useful, even to yourself, if I comment upon your first attempt.

" First, as to the Quarterly Review. You can have no

other authority for ascribing any particular paper in that journal to one person or to another, than common report; in following which you may happen to be as much mistaken as I was when upon the same grounds I supposed Mr. William Smith to be a man of candour, incapable of grossly and wantonly insulting an individual.

"The Quarterly Review stands upon its own merits. It is not answerable for anything more than it contains. What I may have said, or thought, in any part of my life, no more concerns that journal than it does you or the House of Commons; and I am as little answerable for the journal as the journal for me. What I may have written in it is a question which you, Sir, have no right to ask, and which certainly I will not answer. As little right have you to take that for granted which you cannot possibly know. The question, as respects the Quarterly Review, is not who wrote the paper which happens to have excited Mr. William Smith's displeasure, but whether the facts which are there stated are true, the quotations accurate, and the inferences just. The reviewer, whoever he may be, may defy you to disprove them.

"Secondly, as to Wat Tyler. Now, Sir, though you are not acquainted with the full history of this notable production, yet you could not have been ignorant that the author whom you attacked at such unfair advantage was the aggrieved, and not the offending person. You knew that this poem had been written very many years ago, in his early youth. You knew that a copy of it had been surreptitiously obtained, and made public, by some skulking scoundrel, who had found booksellers not more honourable than himself to undertake the publication. You knew that it was published without the writer's knowledge, for the avowed purpose of insulting him, and with the hope of injuring him if possible. You knew that the transaction bore upon its face every character of

baseness and malignity. You knew that it must have been effected either by robbery or by breach of trust. These things, Mr. William Smith, you knew! And, knowing them as you did, I verily believe, that if it were possible to revoke what is irrevocable, you would at this moment be far more desirous of blotting from remembrance the disgraceful speech which stands upon record in your name, than I should be of cancelling the boyish composition which gave occasion to it. Wat Tyler is full of errors; but they are the errors of youth and ignorance; they bear no indication of an ungenerous spirit or of a malevolent heart.

"For the book itself I deny that it is a seditious performance; for it places in the mouths of the personages who are introduced nothing more than a correct statement of their real principles. That it is a mischievous publication, I know; the errors which it contains being especially dangerous at this time. Therefore I came forward to avow it, to claim it as my own property, which had never been alienated, and to suppress it. And I am desirous that my motives in thus acting should not be misunderstood. The piece was written under the influence of opinions which I have long since outgrown, and repeatedly disclaimed, but for which I have never affected to feel either shame or contrition; they were taken up conscientiously in early youth, they were acted upon in disregard of all worldly considerations, and they were left behind in the same straightforward course, as I advanced in years. It was written when republicanism was confined to a very small number of the educated classes; when those who were known to entertain such opinions were exposed to personal danger from the populace; and when a spirit of Anti-Jacobinism was predominant, which I cannot characterise more truly than by saying that it was as unjust and intolerant, though not quite as ferocious,

as the Jacobinism of the present day. Had the poem been published during any quiet state of the public mind, the act of dishonesty in the publisher would have been the same; but I should have left it unnoticed, in full confidence that it would have been forgotten as speedily as it deserved. But in these times it was incumbent upon me to come forward as I have done. It became me to disclaim whatever had been erroneous and intemperate in my former opinions, as frankly and as fearlessly as I once maintained them. And this I did, not as one who felt himself in any degree disgraced by the exposure of the crude and misdirected feelings of his youth (feelings right in themselves, and wrong only in their direction), but as one whom no considerations have ever deterred from doing what he believed to be his duty.

"When, therefore, Mr. William Smith informed the House of Commons that the author of Wat Tyler thinks no longer upon certain points as he did in his youth, he informed that Legislative Assembly of nothing more than what the author has shown during very many years in the course of his writings, — that while events have been moving on upon the great theatre of human affairs, his intellect has not been stationary. But when the Member for Norwich asserts (as he is said to have asserted) that I impute evil motives to men merely for holding now the same doctrines which I myself formerly professed, and when he charges me (as he is said to have charged me) with the malignity and baseness of a renegade, the assertion and the charge are as *false* as the language in which they are conveyed is coarse and insulting.

"Upon this subject I must be heard farther. The Edinburgh Review has spoken somewhere of those vindictive and jealous writings in which Mr. Southey has brought forward his claims to the approbation of the public. This is one of those passages for which the editor

of that review has merited an abatement in heraldry, no such writings ever having been written; and, indeed, by other like assertions of equal veracity, the gentleman has richly entitled himself to bear a *gore sinister tenné* in his escutcheon. Few authors have obtruded themselves upon the public in their individual character less than I have done. My books have been sent into the world with no other introduction than an explanatory Preface as brief as possible, arrogating nothing, vindicating nothing; and then they have been left to their fate. None of the innumerable attacks which have been made upon them has ever called forth on my part a single word of reply, triumphantly as I might have exposed my assailants, not only for their ignorance and inconsistency, but frequently for that moral turpitude, which is implied in wilful and deliberate mis-statement. The unprovoked insults which have been levelled at me, both in prose and rhyme, never induced me to retaliate. It will not be supposed that the ability for satire was wanting, but, happily, I had long since subdued the disposition. I knew that men might be appreciated from the character of their enemies as well as of their friends, and I accepted the hatred of sciolists, coxcombs, and profligates, as one sure proof that I was deserving well of the wise and of the good.

"It will not, therefore, be imputed to any habit of egotism, or any vain desire of interesting the public in my individual concerns, if I now come forward from that privacy in which both from judgment and disposition it would have been my choice to have remained. While among the mountains of Cumberland I have been employed upon the Mines of Brazil, the War in the Peninsula, and such other varieties of pursuit as serve to keep the intellect in health by alternately exercising and refreshing it; my name has served in London for the very

shuttle-cock of discussion. My celebrity for a time has eclipsed that of Mr. Hunt the orator, and may perhaps have impeded the rising reputation of Toby the sapient pig. I have reigned in the newspapers as paramount as Joanna Southcott during the last month of her tympany. Nay, columns have been devoted to Mr. Southey and Wat Tyler which would otherwise have been employed in bewailing the forlorn condition of the Emperor Napoleon, and reprobating the inhumanity of the British Cabinet for having designedly exposed him, like Bishop Hatto, to be devoured by the rats.

"That I should ever be honoured by such a delicate investigation of my political opinions was what I never could have anticipated, even in the wildest dreams of unfledged vanity. Honour, however, has been thrust upon me, as upon Malvolio. The verses of a boy, of which he thought no more than of his school-exercises, and which, had they been published when they were written, would have passed without notice to the family vault, have not only been perused by the Lord Chancellor in his judicial office, but have been twice produced in Parliament for the edification of the Legislature. The appetite for slander must be sharp-set when it can prey upon such small gear! As, however, the opinions of Mr. Southey have not been thought unworthy to occupy so considerable a share of attention, he need not apprehend the censure of the judicious if he takes part in the discussion himself, so far as briefly to inform the world what they really have been, and what they are.

"In my youth, when my stock of knowledge consisted of such an acquaintance with Greek and Roman history as is acquired in the course of a regular scholastic education,—when my heart was full of poetry and romance, and Lucan and Akenside were at my tongue's end, I fell into the political opinions which the French Revolution was then

scattering throughout Europe ; and following these opinions with ardour wherever they led, I soon perceived the inequalities of rank were a light evil compared to the inequalities of property, and those more fearful distinctions which the want of moral and intellectual culture occasions between man and man. At that time, and with those opinions, or rather feelings (for their root was in the heart and not in the understanding), I wrote Wat Tyler, as one who was impatient of 'all the oppressions that are done under the sun.' The subject was injudiciously chosen, and it was treated as might be expected by a youth of twenty, in such times, who regarded only one side of the question. There is no other misrepresentation. The sentiments of the historical characters are correctly stated. Were I now to dramatize the same story, there would be much to add, but little to alter. I should not express these sentiments less strongly, but I should oppose to them more enlarged views of the nature of man and the progress of society. I should set forth with equal force the oppressions of the feudal system, the excesses of the insurgents, and the treachery of the Government; and hold up the errors and crimes which were then committed as a warning for this and for future ages. I should write as a man, not as a stripling; with the same heart and the same desires, but with a ripened understanding and competent stores of knowledge.

" It is a fair and legitimate inference, that no person would have selected this subject, and treated it in such a manner at such a time, unless he had in a certain degree partaken of the sentiments which are expressed in it: in *what* degree he partook them is a question which it requires more temper as well as more discretion to resolve than you, Sir, have given any proof of possessing. This can only be ascertained by comparing the piece with other works of the same author, written about the same time

or shortly afterwards, and under the influence of the same political opinions; by such a comparison it might be discerned what arose from his own feelings, and what from the nature of dramatic composition. But to select passages from a dramatic poem, and ascribe the whole force of the sentiments to the writer as if he himself held them, without the slightest qualification, is a mode of criticism manifestly absurd and unjust. Whether it proceeded in this instance from excess of malice, or deficiency of judgment, is a point which they who are best acquainted with Mr. William Smith may be able to determine.

"It so happens that sufficient specimens of Mr. Southey's way of thinking in his youth are before the world, without breaking open escritoires, or stealing any more of his juvenile papers which he may have neglected to burn. The poem to which, with all its faults, he is indebted for his first favourable notice from the public, may possibly have been honoured with a place in Mr. William Smith's library, as it received the approbation of all the dissenting journals of the day. It is possible that their recommendation may have induced him to favour Joan of Arc with a perusal, and not improbably, in a mood which would indulge its manifold demerits in style and structure, for the sake of its liberal opinions. Perhaps, too, he may have condescended to notice the minor poems of the same author, sanctioned as some of these also were at their first appearance by the same critical authorities. In these productions he may have seen expressed an enthusiastic love of liberty, a detestation of tyranny wherever it exists and in whatever form, an ardent abhorrence of all wicked ambition, and a sympathy not less ardent with those who were engaged in war for the defence of their country, and in a righteous cause, — feelings just as well as generous in themselves. He might have perceived also frequent indications, that in the opinion of the youthful

writer a far happier system of society was possible than any under which mankind are at present existing, or ever have existed since the patriarchal ages, — and no equivocal aspirations after such a state. In all this he might have seen something that was erroneous, and more that was visionary; but nothing that savoured of intemperance or violence. I insist, therefore, that inasmuch as Wat Tyler may differ in character from these works, the difference arises necessarily from the nature of dramatic composition. I maintain that this is the inference which must be drawn by every honest and judicious mind; and I affirm that such an influence would be strictly conformable to the fact.

"Do not, however, Sir, suppose that I shall seek to shrink from a full avowal of what my opinions have been: neither before God or man am I ashamed of them. I have as little cause for humiliation in recalling them, as Gibbon had, when he related how he had knelt at the feet of a confessor: for while I imbibed the republican opinions of the day, I escaped the Atheism, and the leprous immorality which generally accompanied them. I cannot, therefore, join with Beattie in blessing

> 'The hour when I escaped the wrangling crew,
> From Pyrrho's maze and Epicurus' sty.'

For I was never lost in the one, nor defiled in the other. My progress was of a different kind. From building castles in the air to framing commonwealths, was an easy transition; the next step was to realise the vision; and in the hope of accomplishing this, I forsook the course of life for which I had been designed, and the prospects of advancement, which I may say without presumption, were within my reach. My purpose was to retire with a few friends into the wilds of America, and there lay the foundations of a community, upon what we believed to

be the political system of Christianity. It matters not in what manner the vision was dissolved. I am not writing my own memoirs, and it is sufficient simply to state the fact. We were connected with no clubs, no societies, no party. The course which we would have pursued might have proved destructive to ourselves, but as it related to all other persons, never did the aberrations of youth take a more innocent direction.

"I know, Sir, that you were not ignorant of this circumstance: the project, while it was in view, was much talked of among that sect of Christians to which you belong; and some of your friends are well acquainted with the events of my life. What, then, I may ask, did you *learn* concerning me from this late surreptitious publication? Nay, Sir, the personal knowledge which you possessed was not needful for a full understanding of the political opinions which I entertained in youth. They are expressed in poems which have been frequently reprinted, and are continually on sale; no alterations have ever been made for the purpose of withdrawing, concealing, or extenuating them. I have merely affixed to every piece the date of the year in which it was written, — and the progress of years is sufficient to explain the change.

"You, Mr. William Smith, may possibly be acquainted with other persons who were republicans in the first years of the French Revolution, and who have long since ceased to be so, with as little impeachment of their integrity as of their judgment; yet you bring it as a heinous charge against me, that, having entertained enthusiastic notions in my youth, three-and-twenty years should have produced a change in the opinions of one whose life has been devoted to the acquirement of knowledge.

"You are pleased, in your candour, to admit that I might have been sincere when I was erroneous, and you, who are a professor of modern liberality, are not pleased

to admit that the course of time and events may have corrected me in what was wrong, and confirmed me in what was right. True it is that the events of the last five-and-twenty years have been lost upon you; perhaps you judge me by yourself, and you may think that this is a fair criterion; but I must protest against being measured by any such standard. Between you and me, Sir, there can be no sympathy, even though we should sometimes happen to think alike. We are as unlike in all things as men of the same time, country, and rank in society, can be imagined to be; and the difference is in our mind and mould as we came from the Potter's hand.

"And what, Sir, is the change in the opinions of Mr. Southey, which has drawn upon him the ponderous displeasure of William Smith? This was a point upon which it behoved you to be especially well informed before you applied to him the false and insolent appellation which you are said to have used, and which I am authorised in believing that you have used. He has ceased to believe that old monarchical countries are capable of republican forms of government. He has ceased to think that he understood the principles of government, and the nature of man and society, before he was one-and-twenty years of age. He has ceased to suppose that men who neither cultivate their intellectual nor their moral faculties can understand them at any age. He has ceased to wish for revolutions even in countries where great alteration is to be desired, because he has seen that the end of anarchy is military despotism. But he has not ceased to love liberty with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength; he has not ceased to detest tyranny wherever it exists, and in whatever form. He has not ceased to abhor the wickedness of ambition, and to sympathise with those who were engaged in the defence of their country and in a righteous cause: if, indeed,

he had, he might have been sure of the approbation, not only of Mr. William Smith, and of those persons who were during the war the sober opponents of their country's cause, but of the whole crew of ultra Whigs and Anarchists, from Messrs. Brougham and Clodius, down to Cobbett, Cethegus, and Co.

"Many were the English who wished well to the French at the commencement of their Revolution; but if any of those Englishmen have attached the same interest to the cause of France through all the changes of the Revolution, — if they have hoped that Bonaparte might succeed in the usurpation of Portugal and Spain, and the subjugation of the Continent, — the change is in them, in their feelings and their principles, not in me and in mine. At no time of my life have I held any opinions like those of the Bonapartists and Revolutionists of the present day; never could I have held any communion with such men in thought, word, or deed; — my nature, God be thanked! would always have kept me from them instinctively, as it would from toad or asp. Look through the whole writings of my youth, including, if you please, Wat Tyler, — there can be no danger that its errors should infect a gentleman who has called upon the Attorney-general to prosecute the author; and he would not be the worse were he to catch from it a little of the youthful generosity which it breathes. I ask you, Sir, in which of those writings I have appealed to the base or the malignant feelings of mankind; and I ask you whether the present race of revolutionary writers appeal to any other? What man's private character did I stab? Whom did I libel? Whom did I slander? Whom did I traduce? These miscreants live by calumny and sedition; they are libellers and liars by trade.

"The one object to which I have ever been desirous of contributing according to my power, is the removal of

those obstacles by which the improvement of mankind is impeded; and to this the whole tenour of my writings, whether in prose, or verse, bears witness. This has been the pole-star of my course; the needle has shifted according to the movements of the state vessel wherein I am embarked, but the direction to which it points has always been the same. I did not fall into the error of those who having been the friends of France when they imagined that the cause of liberty was implicated in her success, transferred their attachment from the Republic to the military tyranny in which it ended, and regarded with complacency the progress of oppression, because France was the oppressor. 'They had turned their faces towards the east in the morning to worship the rising sun, and in the evening they were looking eastward still, obstinately affirming that still the sun was there.'* I, on the contrary, altered my position as the world went round. For so doing, Mr. William Smith is said to have insulted me with the appellation of renegade; and if it be indeed true that the foul aspersion passed his lips, I brand him for it on the forehead with the name of SLANDERER. Salve the mark as you will, Sir, it is ineffaceable! You must bear it with you to your grave, and the remembrance will outlast your epitaph.

"And now, Sir, learn what are the opinions of the man to whom you have offered this public and notorious wrong, — opinions not derived from any contagion of the times, nor entertained with the unreflecting eagerness of youth, nor adopted in connection with any party in the State; but gathered patiently, during many years of leisure and retirement, from books, observation, meditation, and intercourse with living minds who will be the light of other ages.

* I quote my own words, written in 1809.

" Greater changes in the condition of the country have been wrought during the last half century, than an equal course of years had ever before produced. Without entering into the proofs of this proposition, suffice it to indicate, as among the most efficient causes, the steam and the spinning engines, the mail coach, and the free publication of the debates in Parliament: hence follow, in natural and necessary consequence, increased activity, enterprise, wealth, and power; but, on the other hand, greediness of gain, looseness of principle, half knowledge (more perilous than ignorance), vice, poverty, wretchedness, disaffection, and political insecurity. The changes which have taken place render other changes inevitable; forward we must go, for it is not possible to retrace our steps; the hand of the political horologe cannot go back, like the shadow upon Hezekiah's dial; — when the hour comes, it must strike.

" Slavery has long ceased to be tolerable in Europe: the remains of feudal oppression are disappearing even in those countries which have improved the least: nor can it be much longer endured that the extremes of ignorance, wretchedness, and brutality should exist in the very centre of civilised society. There can be no safety with a populace half Luddite, half Lazzaroni. Let us not deceive ourselves. We are far from that state in which anything resembling equality would be possible; but we are arrived at that state in which the extremes of inequality are become intolerable. They are too dangerous, as well as too monstrous, to be borne much longer. Plans which would have led to the utmost horrors of insurrection have been prevented by the Government, and by the enactment of strong, but necessary laws. Let it not, however, be supposed that the disease is healed, because the ulcer may skin over. The remedies by which the body politic can be restored to health must be

slow in their operation. The condition of the populace, physical, moral, and intellectual, must be improved, or a *Jacquerie*, a *Bellum Servile*, sooner or later, will be the result. It is the People at this time who stand in need of reformation, not the Government.

"The Government must better the condition of the populace; and the first thing necessary is to prevent it from being worsened. It must no longer suffer itself to be menaced, its chief magistrate insulted, and its most sacred institutions vilified with impunity. It must curb the seditious press, and keep it curbed. For this purpose, if the laws are not at present effectual, they should be made so; nor will they then avail, unless they are vigilantly executed. I say this, well knowing to what obloquy it will expose me, and how grossly and impudently my meaning will be misrepresented; but I say it, because, if the licentiousness of the press be not curbed, its abuse will most assuredly one day occasion the loss of its freedom.

"This is the first and most indispensable measure, for without this all others will be fruitless. Next in urgency is the immediate relief of the poor. I differ *toto cœlo* from Mr. Owen, of Lanark, in one main point. To build upon any other foundation than religion, is building upon sand. But I admire his practical benevolence; I love his enthusiasm; and I go far with him in his earthly views. What he has actually done entitles him to the greatest attention and respect. I sincerely wish that his plan for the extirpation of pauperism should be fairly tried. To employ the poor in manufactures is only shifting the evil, and throwing others out of employ by bringing more labour and more produce of labour into a market which is already overstocked.

"Wise and extensive plans of foreign colonisation contribute essentially to keep a State like England in health;

but we must not overlook the greater facility of colonising at home. Would it not be desirable that tracts of waste land should be purchased with public money, to be held as national domains, and colonised with our disbanded soldiers and sailors, and people who are in want of employment, dividing them into estates of different sizes, according to the capability of the speculators, and allotting to every cottage that should be erected there a certain proportion of ground? Thus should we make immediate provision for those brave men whose services are no longer required for the defence of their country; — thus should we administer immediate relief to the poor, lighten the poor-rates, give occupation to various branches of manufacture, and provide a permanent source of revenue, accruing from the increased prosperity of the country. There never was a time when every rood of ground maintained its man; but surely it is allowable to hope that whole districts will not always be suffered to lie waste while multitudes are in want of employment and of bread.

"A duty scarcely less urgent than that of diminishing the burden of the poor-rates, is that of providing for the education of the lower classes. Government must no longer, in neglect of its first and paramount duty, allow them to grow up in worse than heathen ignorance. They must be trained in the way they should go; they must be taught to 'fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.' Mere reading and writing will not do this: they must be instructed according to the Established religion, — they must be fed with the milk of sound doctrine, for States are secure in proportion as the great body of the people are attached to the institutions of their country. A moral and religious education will induce habits of industry; the people will know their duty, and find their interest and their happiness in follow-

ing it. Give us the great boon of parochial education, so connected with the Church as to form part of the Establishment, and we shall find it a bulwark to the State as well as to the Church. Let this be done; let savings' banks be generally introduced; let new channels for industry be opened (as soon as the necessities of the State will permit) by a liberal expenditure in public works, by colonising our waste lands at home, and regularly sending off our swarms abroad, — and the strength, wealth, and security of the nation will be in proportion to its numbers.

"Never, indeed, was there a more senseless cry than that which is at this time raised for retrenchment in the public expenditure, as a means of alleviating the present distress. That distress arises from a great and sudden diminution of employment, occasioned by many coinciding causes, the chief of which is, that the war-expenditure of from forty to fifty millions yearly has ceased. Men are out of employ: the evil is, that too little is spent, and, as a remedy, we are exhorted to spend less. Everywhere there are mouths crying out for food, because the hands want work; and at this time, and for this reason, the State-quack requires further reduction. Because so many hands are unemployed, he calls upon Government to throw more upon the public by reducing its establishments and suspending its works. *O lepidum caput!* and it is by such heads as this that we are to be reformed!

"'Statesmen,' says Mr. Burke, 'before they value themselves on the relief given to the people by the destruction (or diminution) of their revenue, ought first to have carefully attended to the solution of this problem — whether it be more advantageous to the people to pay considerably and to gain in proportion, or to gain little or nothing and to be disburdened of all contribution.'

And in another place this great statesman says, 'The prosperity and improvement of nations have generally increased with the increase of their revenues; and they will both continue to grow and flourish as long as the balance between what is left to strengthen the efforts of individuals, and what is collected for the common efforts of the State, bear to each other a due reciprocal proportion, and are kept in a close correspondence and communication.' This opinion is strikingly corroborated by the unexampled prosperity which the country enjoyed during the war,—a war of unexampled expenditure; and the stupendous works of antiquity, the ruins of which at this day so mournfully attest the opulence and splendour of States which have long ceased to exist, were in no slight degree the causes of that prosperity of which they are the proofs. Instead, therefore, of this senseless cry for retrenchment, which is like prescribing depletion for a patient whose complaints proceed from inanition, a liberal expenditure should be advised in works of public utility and magnificence. For if experience has shown us that increased expenditure during war, and a proportionately increasing prosperity, have been naturally connected as cause and consequence, it is neither rash nor illogical to infer that a liberal expenditure in peace upon national works would produce the same beneficial effect without any of the accompanying evil. Money thus expended will flow like chyle into the veins of the State, and nourish and invigorate it. Build, therefore, our monuments for Trafalgar and Waterloo, and let no paltry considerations prevent them from being made worthy of the occasion and of the country,—of the men who have fought, conquered, and died for us,—of Nelson, of Wellington, and of Great Britain! Let them be such as may correspond in splendour with the actions to which they are consecrated, and vie, if possible, in duration with the

memory of those immortal events. They are for after ages: the more magnificent they may be, the better will they manifest the national sense of great public services, and the more will they excite and foster that feeling in which great actions have their root. In proportion to their magnificence, also, will be the present benefit, as well as the future good; for they are not like the Egyptian pyramids, to be raised by bondsmen under rigorous task-masters; the wealth which is taken from the people returns to them again, like vapours which are drawn imperceptibly from the earth, but distributed to it in refreshing dews and fertilising showers. What bounds could imagination set to the welfare and glory of this island, if a tenth part, or even a twentieth of what the war expenditure has been, were annually applied in improving and creating harbours, in bringing our roads to the best possible state, in colonising upon our waste lands, in reclaiming fens and conquering tracts from the sea, in encouraging the liberal arts, in erecting churches, in building and endowing schools and colleges, and making war upon physical and moral evil with the whole artillery of wisdom and righteousness, with all the resources of science, and all the ardour of enlightened and enlarged benevolence?

"It is likewise incumbent upon Government to take heed lest, in its solicitude for raising the necessary revenue, there should be too little regard for the means by which it is raised. It should beware of imposing such duties as create a strong temptation to evade them. It should be careful that all its measures tend as much as possible to the improvement of the people, and especially careful nothing be done which can tend in any way to corrupt them. It should reform its prisons, and apply some remedy to the worst grievance which exists,—the enormous expenses, the chicanery, and the ruinous delays of the law.

" Machiavelli says, that legislators ought to suppose all men to be naturally bad ; — in no point has that sagacious statesman been more erroneous. Fitter it is that governments should think well of mankind ; for the better they think of them the better they will find them, and the better they will make them. Government must reform the populace, the people must reform themselves. This is the true reform, and compared with this all else is *flocci, nauci, nihili, pili.*

" Such, Sir, are, in part, the views of the man whom you have traduced. Had you perused his writings, you could not have mistaken them ; and I am willing to believe that if you had done this, and formed an opinion for yourself, instead of retailing that of wretches who are at once the panders of malice and the pioneers of rebellion, you would neither have been so far forgetful of your parliamentary character, nor of the decencies between man and man, as so wantonly, so unjustly, and in such a place, to have attacked one who had given you no provocation.

" Did you imagine that I should sit down quietly under the wrong, and treat your attack with the same silent contempt as I have done all the abuse and calumny with which, from one party or the other, anti-Jacobins or Jacobins, I have been assailed in daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly publications, since the year 1796, when I first became known to the public? The place where you made the attack, and the manner of the attack, prevent this.

" How far the writings of Mr. Southey may be found to deserve a favourable acceptance from after ages, time will decide: but a name which, whether worthily or not, has been conspicuous in the literary history of its age, will certainly not perish. Some account of his life will always be prefixed to his works, and transferred to literary histories and to the biographical dictionaries, not only of

this, but of other countries. There it will be related, that he lived in the bosom of his family, in absolute retirement; that in all his writings there breathed the same abhorrence of oppression and immorality, the same spirit of devotion, and the same ardent wishes for the amelioration of mankind; and that the only charge which malice could bring against him was, that as he grew older his opinions altered concerning the means by which that amelioration was to be effected; and that as he learnt to understand the institutions of his country, he learnt to appreciate them rightly, to love, and to revere, and to defend them. It will be said of him, that in an age of personality he abstained from satire, and that during the course of his literary life, often as he was assailed, the only occasion on which he ever condescended to reply, was when a certain Mr. William Smith insulted him in Parliament with the appellation of renegade. On that occasion it will be said, that he vindicated himself as it became him to do, and treated his calumniator with just and memorable severity. Whether it shall be added, that Mr. William Smith redeemed his own character by coming forward with honest manliness and acknowledging that he had spoken rashly and unjustly, concerns himself, but is not of the slightest importance to me.

ROBERT SOUTHEY."

END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.

LONDON:
SPOTTISWOODES and SHAW,
New-Street-Square.